Foster Care Report
September 2000

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to summarize current foster care programs in all provinces *. The report is based on information provided by provincial officials.

The initial version of this report was produced in January 1992 and updated on an ad hoc basis as rates changed. In December 1995, the report was restructured to provide, in addition to the existing rate information, a more detailed description of the foster care system in each jurisdiction across Canada. The summaries cover the following features: types of foster care, Training and Approval procedures, the review/evaluation process, appeals/complaints, foster parent associations, damage compensation, foster care rates (including mechanisms for establishing rates, periodicity of changes, basic maintenance rate components and actual basic rates), additional allowable expenses, special rates, if any, and substitute care arrangements.

Federal Children's Special Allowances (CSA) are payable on behalf of all children under the age of 18 who are maintained by a child welfare agency, a government department or an institution authorized to be responsible for the care and custody of children. The CSA is equal to the maximum base amount of the Child Tax Benefit plus the National Child Benefit supplement (NCBS) - $173.42 as of July 2000.

Jurisdictions have taken different approaches in allocating the CSA. Under the National Child Benefit, jurisdictions may choose to pass on any increase to the NCBS to child welfare authorities or recover the increase and allocate it to broader NCB reinvestment strategies to assist all low-income families. As a result some distribute all or part of the CSA directly to foster families. Others consider it part of their operating revenue and it becomes part of the foster care structure or special needs rates. In all jurisdictions, child welfare authorities allocate the CSA funds as they see fit.

In all instances, the term "provinces" has been used to refer to both provinces and territories.

Note: the Quebec section of this report is still being finalized.

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Children's Special Allowances

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Newfoundland and Labrador

Introduction

The placement of children is guided by the philosophy and principles of the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act (CYFSA)*. In addition to the *Act*, various policies and programs relating to the placement of children are: Permanency Planning, Parent Resources for Information and Development (P.R.I.D.E.) Model for Co-ordination of Services for Children and Youth, and Individual support Services Planning Process (I.S.S.P.).

When family circumstances are such that children require protective intervention in the form of out of home placement, the placement is conducted in the least intrusive manner possible, bearing in mind the best interest of children in accordance with the *CYFSA*. Caregiver service (formally known as foster care) is used as a placement option for children who cannot live at home and for whom a relative placement is not available. The supervisor authorized by Child, Youth and Family Services approves caregiver homes. Placements are made by the social worker at the field level. The Department of Health and Community Services funds caregiver homes through a per diem rate structure paid to the Health and Community Services and Integrated Health Boards.

Types of Placements

There are several placement options for children requiring out-of-home placements and services.

Family/Significant Other

Under section 62(2) of the *CYFSA*, the first placement consideration of a child must be with a relative or a person with whom the child has a significant relationship. A person who provides care under this part must be approved by a director or social worker.

The approval process requires a home visit with all persons in the home being interviewed, a prior contact check of child welfare involvement, police checks, two non-relative references, one collateral reference, medical examinations on persons living in the home and interviews with the child on the day of the placement and seven days following the placement.

Non-Custodial Parent

Under section 62(3), where a child is removed by a director or social worker from a custodial parent and the non-custodial parent is considered by the director or social worker to be suitable to provide care, the child may be placed with the non-custodial parent pending final determination of the application by the court.

The social worker must complete an assessment of the living arrangement which includes:

- A home visit to determine the appropriateness of the living arrangement
- Determining the wishes of the child and the relationship that exists between the child and the non-custodial parent
- Determining that the placement is suitable to meet the child's needs
- Police checks and/or certificates of conduct; and
- Determining the factors which led to the child being in custody of the other parent.

Caregiver Services

When a child cannot be placed in accordance with section 62(2) or (3) of the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act* (*CYFSA*), the child may be placed with a caregiver who must be approved by a director or a social worker.

Training and Approval

P.R.I.D.E., the model that is used for Pre-service training of Prospective Caregivers and Adoptive Parents, is the mandatory standard for all new approved caregivers. Before any family is approved as a caregiver and a child is placed in the home, the pre-service training must be completed.

An application for caregiver services, the supporting documentation, plus the worker's recommendation are submitted to the supervisor for consideration. Each time a home is approved, the social worker and the caregiver sign a caregiver home agreement. The approval states the maximum number of children that can be placed in a home. The supervisor may also reclassify, revoke, or refuse to approve a caregiver home.

Families/significant others approved under section 62(2) are not required to attend P.R.I.D.E. training. However, if the family wishes to attend, they may do so.

Review/Evaluation

An annual report on every caregiver home approved under Section 62 of the *CYFSA* is to be submitted to the supervisor. The report includes a recommendation regarding continued use of the home.

Appeals/Complaints

There is no formal appeal process. If they are not satisfied with a decision made by the Director of Child, Youth and Family Services, the families may ask for a review of the decision. If a family wishes to appeal the removal of a child from their home, they may do so by taking the matter to the supreme Court of Newfoundland.

Allegations of Abuse or Neglect

Allegations of abuse or neglect must be investigated immediately by a Health and Community Services or Integrated Health Board other than the one responsible for the regular supervision of the home. Physical or sexual abuse complaints must be referred to the police for investigation. Investigations are carried out jointly by the police and the staff of Health and Community Services or Integrated Health Boards.

Newfoundland and Labrador Caregiver Association

The Newfoundland and Labrador Caregiver Association (formerly the

Newfoundland and Labrador Foster Families Association) was established in 1982 to support caregivers. A liaison committee made up of Association members and Provincial Department of Health and Community Services and Integrated Health Board Staff, meets on a regular basis to work on issues affecting the quality of care provided to children in care. The Association works with the Department and Board Staff in providing training to caregivers and has assisted in the development of the caregiver handbook. The Department of Health and Community Services funds the Association by providing them with an annual grant.

Damage Compensation

Caregivers are not required to have liability insurance. When a child in care accidentally or wilfully damages property, the child is expected to try to make amends through appropriate methods such as earning extra money to cover the cost of repairs.

Payment of damages up to $2,400 per child per incident may be approved by the supervisor. Amounts in excess of $2,400 must be approved by the Director of Child, Youth and Family Services.

Caregiver Rates

In addition to the caregiver program, the Department of Health and Community Services also provides financial assistance to persons caring for the child of a relative, where the child is **not** in the care and custody of the Director of Child, Youth and Family Services. This program called the Child Welfare Allowance, is described following the information on caregiver rates below.

Establishment of Rates

Generally, caregiver rates are set by regulation. Caregiver services are managed by Health and Community Services and Integrated Health Boards across the Province; however, monthly maintenance payments are forwarded directly to caregivers by the Director of Child, Youth and Family Services.

Basic Maintenance Rates

The basic maintenance rate is paid to approved caregivers and is based on the age of the child to cover food, housing, laundry/dry cleaning, personal items and additional care costs.

Basic Maintenance Rates
(effective April 1, 1993)

	0-11 years		*12 and over*	
	Monthly	*Per Diem*	*Monthly*	*Per Diem*
Total Basic Maintenance Rate	**$452.10**	**$15.07**	**$522.30**	**$17.41**

Additional Allowable Expenses

The Department of Health and Community Services provides additional amounts to cover emergency and initial placement costs. Additional funds may be provided for school supplies, recreation, travel and other needs.

Special Rate Provisions

Upon the placement of a child, the social worker approves the basic

maintenance rate. After a 30 day period, **If deemed necessary**, a thorough analysis of the child's needs is completed to determine if additional assistance is required. This will be done in consultation with the caregiver(s) via the Special Needs Assessment Form. The Special Needs Assessment Rate is paid over and above the basic rate.

The assessment identifies 12 key areas of possible need for a child in care. The amount of monies to be paid on behalf of the child with special needs is determined by the completion of the Special Needs Assessment Form. The form is to be completed jointly by the social worker and the caregivers. Other professionals involved with the child may be invited to participate and/or provide any documentation as required.

Special Needs Rates will be reviewed at least every six months and adjusted accordingly at the time of the review. All rates may be reviewed at shorter intervals if it can be demonstrated that there has been a change in the child's needs. The caregiver or social worker may initiate such a review.

Reviews may indicate that a reduction is required in the payment and/or services as the child's needs have changed. Payments and services must be adjusted to reflect the assessed need. The basic rate paid to the caregiver family will not change. Any reduction in the special needs rate as determined through the assessment, will become effective on the first of the following month.

On the last page of the form there is a section - ISSUES IDENTIFIED TO BE EXPLORED FURTHER IN THE CASE PLAN. The social worker and caregivers are encouraged to document any issues that either would like to see addressed or explored as part of the case plan for the child. This facilitates future planning and goal setting for the child.

The twelve key areas identified are: eating, personal care, socialization, communication, health, behaviour management, developmental, sexuality, life skills, school/education, emotional/ psychiatric/psychological, and family involvement.

Medical documentation is required for the following key areas to support an increase in the rate or to maintain an increased rate: 1) eating; 2) communication; 3) health; and 4) emotional/psychiatric/psychological. The social worker is responsible for obtaining the required documentation. Any required documentation must be attached to the Special Needs Assessment and retained in the child's file.

Child Welfare Allowance

When a child is at risk of maltreatment in his/her own family, or the family requires short term placement, the social worker may explore the possibility of placing the child with a relative/significant other. This placement is an alternative to bringing the child into the custody of the Director of Child, Youth and Family Services. In such a case, the parent(s), the relative/significant other and the Board agree to the placement. The parents retain custody and the child enters into the care of the Director. Under this arrangement, a "Child Welfare Allowance" may be paid to the relative/significant other caring for the child.

In addition to the child welfare allowance rates, a child may qualify for assistance with the cost of school books, eye glasses, dental care, prescribed drugs, special footwear or braces provided by the Department of Health and Community Services, transportation for medical purposes and transportation to return the child to the permanent custody of the parents, if the parents cannot cover the transportation cost. A social worker can increase the allowance paid

up to a maximum caregiver rate of $1,038 per month, based upon a Special Needs Assessment. The rate of the allowance is conditionally based upon all other benefits the child is receiving (e.g., Canada Pension Plan) or if caregivers are employed full time.

The caregivers may also apply for the Federal Child Tax Benefit.

Child Welfare Allowance Rates[1]
(effective November 1, 1992)

Age	*Monthly Rate*
0-5 years	$121.00
6-12 years	148.00
Over 12 years	178.00

[1]The person receiving the Child Welfare Allowance may be eligible for the federal Child Tax Benefit on behalf of the child.

Substitute Care Arrangements

Each of the six Health and Community Services and Integrated Health Boards has different placement options, including: relative/significant others, a small number of Board operated group homes, two emergency placement facilities for children 12-16 years of age and residential placements for youth between 16 and 21 who may choose to live semi-independently or independently.

There are no institutional facilities in Newfoundland and Labrador for children in care. Out-of-province facilities are used when necessary, provided space is available. This option is viewed as a last resort for very challenging children and youth.

Assistance in preparation for independent living is available to youth over the age of 16 who have entered into a Youth Care Agreement with the Director of Child, Youth and Family services.

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Prince Edward Island

Introduction

In this province, children and youth are cared for "away from their families" in either family foster care homes or adolescent group homes. A Provincial Foster Care Committee is responsible to formulate and recommend provincial policies and standards with participation from regional "Resource" staff, Foster Parent representatives, and Central Office leadership. A provincial Foster Parent Program is in place within the provincial framework of five Regional Health Authorities that control budget allocation and day-to-day program duties in their regions.

The province is currently working through a range of policy changes and developing further recommendations following a review of the current fostering system, which has been in place for the past four years.

Types of Foster Care

Foster Carers are categorized into the following groupings:

1. ***"Active"*** Foster Carers: those who care for children/youth in temporary or "short term" care.
2. ***"Permanent"*** Foster Carers: those who have care plans for children/youth for 18 months or longer.
3. Combination ***"Active/Permanent"*** Foster Carers: homes that combine both types of foster care.
4. ***"Group"*** Foster Care: caregivers who care for three or more children/youth in their homes.
5. ***"Relative"*** or ***"Kinship"*** Foster Carers: these are caregivers who have been part of the child/youth's natural network who contract to provide care on either a "short-term" or "permanent" basis. These caregivers are not processed in the same fashion as other caregivers when they enter the program.

Foster Care Classification Levels

Every ***"Active"*** or ***"Permanent"*** foster home is assigned a Classification Level 1, Level 2, or Level 3. The classification levels have been introduced to the foster care program as one method to identify and recognise the different skill levels of caregivers and to aid in making appropriate matches for placement of children and youth in the province. The "skill rating score" which caregivers achieve with the "Classification Level Assessment Tool" in part determines the Level determination. Other factors involved in the assignment of Classification Level are a) the Regional Needs and Budget flexibility, as well as b) the level of intensity of care the caregivers are willing to provide.

Specialized Foster Care

Some families focus their services by specializing with different ages of

children or in more specialized service such as:

- Respite Homes
- PAIR Homes (Parent and Infant Resource)
- Emergency Care (Care for up to 30 days)
- Families Helping Families (Caregiver works intensively with both the child/youth and the natural family)
- supervised Apartment (Caregiver supervises older youth or young mother in semi-independent living arrangement as transition to independent living).

Provincial LAP Program

A provincial therapeutic program of care and education for deeply troubled, at serious risk children 12 years and younger is operated in Charlottetown and is open to eligible children anywhere in the province. This program is designed to assist families with children who are displaying severe emotional or behaviour problems. There are five families in this program. The program provides foster care for the children, counselling (individual, family, and group) for the parents while the child is in care, and follow-up services after the child returns to the natural home or another foster family.

Children are placed in this program for up to two years, and it includes up to two years of follow-up support. A full-time co-ordinator runs the program and provides support and guidance to the foster parents and arranges additional activities/services required for the children. Group work is done with foster families, natural families, and the children in the program.

Training and Approval

Regional resource staff in each of the five health regions of the province perform this role.

The application process for foster carers begins with a **"Foster Parent Information"** session for a group of potential applicants or interested parties. At that session the combined **"Self-Assessment Questionnaire and Application Form"** is given to those who have an interest in making a formal application to become caregivers in the region.

The **"Self-Assessment Questionnaire"** provides the non-negotiable criteria related to applicants. If the applicant(s) pass this screening, the Child Protection Registry is checked. At this point, if there is no reason to refuse the application, a primary worker will be assigned to complete a **Foster Parent Intake Assessment.** This also includes a determination if the applicants meet the Housing and Safety Standards of the Province for Fostering. If the assessment is positive, and the applicants wish to continue, they would proceed to the stage at which the **Family Assessment** and **"Preparation for Fostering"** group training is done. Criminal record checks, references, medicals and other professional reports are requested (when appropriate) at this stage.

If the applicants are given "Probationary" approval they are ready for their first placement and a "Buddy" (an experienced foster carer) is selected for them and contracted for a basic number of hours of support during that first placement. This provides additional support to that provided by the office staff.

After three months placement, or the end of that first placement, if that is earlier, the placement experience is evaluated. Depending upon the evaluation, the options would be to recommend registration as an approved family or extension of the probationary status.

The "Preparation for Fostering" training is often done by a Resource Social Worker and an experienced foster carer. The training involves six to eight two-hour sessions. This ideally should be done with eight to 12 new foster parents prior to the first placement in any family.

Foster carers are encouraged to attend any training sessions and workshops which would enhance their skills. The expectation is that all active and permanent caregivers receive a minimum of 10 hours of formal training each year.

Review/Evaluation

Each foster carer is assigned a "Home" Worker, who is responsible to support the foster home and be the ongoing connection with each home. Each child placed in a foster home has an assigned "Child Welfare" Social Worker, whose primary responsibility is to ensure that the child's needs are being met and that the case plan for this child is being followed. In most cases, this worker is also the direct worker for the natural family. In homes with permanent placements, the home worker and the child's worker may be the same person.

At the conclusion of each placement, a *"Post Placement Evaluation"* is expected to be completed. In this review session the foster carer, home worker and child worker review the placement and note achievements and any difficulties that arose during the placement. It is recorded if issues were resolved to the satisfaction of all parties and if further training or development is required in future placements for any of the "team" members involved. All three parties sign this assessment form and a copy is placed in the child's and foster carer's files.

In most regions of the province foster carers are assigned to a "Cluster Group" in their region for ongoing support and development. These groups of foster carers meet either bi-weekly or monthly and are facilitated by either an experienced caregiver or a resource social worker.

Appeals/Complaints

Allegations of Abuse or Neglect in a Foster Home Resource

The province has a policy that states that all allegations are to be immediately reported to a supervisor and given immediate priority for investigation. Detailed steps are outlined which emphasize prompt and thorough steps in an attempt to ensure the protection of both the child/youth and the foster carer. Procedures are intended to ensure objectivity in the assessment and to involve senior administrative personnel in the process.

Foster carers under investigation will be notified that an investigation is underway as soon as the decision is made that a formal investigation is warranted. For the caregivers' support and information, a referral will be made to the FAST team (Foster Parents support Team under the authority of the Provincial Federation of Foster Families).

Federation of Foster Families/Foster Parents Associations

In each of the five regions of the province there are local associations of foster families. Most regions hold monthly meetings. The Provincial Federation of Foster Families provides an insurance rider for foster carers with membership in their association. Membership is compulsory for all provincial foster carers to ensure this insurance coverage. The Provincial Federation also provides for two major training sessions each year for foster carers with their Spring Annual

Symposium and their Fall General Annual Meeting. They also invite regional child welfare staff to these sessions.

Foster Care Rates

Monthly level payments are paid to caregivers according to the level (see section on "Foster Care Classification Levels" for description of levels) they have been assigned in their region:

Level 1: $200 per month per family
Level 2: $600 per month per family
Level 3: $1,000 per month per family

A "second bed fee" is also paid to these homes when a second placement is made in the home. These monthly rates are $100 for Level 1, $200 for Level 2 and $300 for Level 3. There are no additional payments related to level for additional placements in the home.

Individual contracts with caregivers are done annually and payments are made on a monthly basis to "active" homes, whether or not there is a placement in the home. If caregivers are unable to fulfil the conditions associated with the contract level of payments, they could be adjusted down, or in some cases, terminated.

Foster carers have the right to appeal a decision on their classification levels to the Foster Care Appeal Board.

Children and Youth in Temporary or "Short" Term Care

After 30 days in a placement a "Child Care Category Assessment Form" is completed. Using a point system, all "active" children are categorized into either child care category 1, 2, or 3. Child care payments to caregivers are based upon two age groupings as well as category level:

Direct Child-Related Payments
(Effective July 1996)

Level	*Children 0-11 years (per month)*	*Youth 12 years and older (per month)*
Care 1	$400	$560
Care 2	$700	$850
Care 3	$900	$1,050

These rates cover the direct child care coasts for room and board, monthly clothing allowances, and routine travel expenses. Infants on formula are allowed the extra cost of formula in addition to the established rates. All children in care are eligible for dental, medical and optical services and prescription drug coverage.

Children and Youth in Permanent Care Arrangements

When children or youth have a case plan which includes living in the same home for 18 months or more, they are considered to be in Long Term or

Permanent Care. The direct child care financial rates to caregivers are equal to the monthly Level 1 rate plus the amount which has been determined by points using the *"Historical Risk Assessment Form"*. The maximum paid is $500/month.

Additional Allowable Expenses

An initial clothing allowance may be provided, based on need, when the child comes into care or when a child/youth has extraordinary clothing needs. "Extraordinary" travel costs are also allowed on a case by case basis. Some special needs costs (e.g., recreational, educational, private counselling) are also covered when considered vital to the child's/youth's case plans.

Respite Care

All caregivers are eligible for 24 days' respite a year. Respite providers are ordinarily other approved caregivers, but in some situations non-foster parents are approved after screening (criminal record check and child protection registry screening) and meeting other eligibility requirements. Respite Rates are determined by category rating of the child or youth:

Category 1: $25;
Category 2: $35; and
Category 3: $45 per 24 hour day.

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Nova Scotia

Introduction

Foster family placements are the most commonly used alternative form of care for children residing outside of their birth family care. District Offices of the Department of Community Services and Child and Family Services agencies provide approval and support services to foster families.

Recruitment and training services are delivered by the Department of Community Services through Regional Placement Resource Teams within the four Regions of the Province.

The Department of Community Services provides overall policy, procedures, and guidelines for the operation of the Foster Care Program. Recommendations for policy development are determined by the Provincial Joint Committee on Foster Care, consisting of equal representation from the four Regions in social work and supervisory staff, foster families, and provincially, the Federation of Foster Families of Nova Scotia, the Child in Care Program. The Joint Committee is chaired by the Provincial Coordinator of Foster Care.

Types of Foster Care

There are three categories of foster care in Nova Scotia: regular foster care homes, parent counsellor homes and special relative/non-relative foster homes.

Regular Foster Care Homes

These foster families have been approved by Agency and District Office staff to provide care to children and youth. They receive daily maintenance monies and reimbursable child in care expenses under the Child in Care Program.

Parent Counsellor Homes

These foster families receive additional training and therapeutic support to provide care for children and youth with a high level of special needs. They receive a monthly honorarium, as well as the per diem child in care rate when a child or youth is placed in their home. The Regions administer the parent counselor program.

Special Relative/Non-Relative Foster Homes

This category includes families who are friends or relatives of a child in care and have been approved specifically for a child or sibling group. These are child- or youth-specific homes that were initiated through child protection and eventually approved through the Foster Care Program.

Training and Approval

In the fall of 2000, Agency/District Office, and regional staff commenced the first level of training required to implement the core in-service training of P.R.I.D.E. Changes will be ongoing throughout the foster care system as social workers and foster families are gradually presented to P.R.I.D.E..

Introductory Level of Care

Basic mandatory core training is the fundamental component necessary to meet the requirements for the introductory level of care, and it consists of:

- Foster Family Orientation Program (six sessions lasting two and a half hours each);
- Non-Violent Crisis Intervention training (one-day, basic level 1; two-day, level 2; one-day yearly re-certification); and
- Sensitivity training for Foster Families (two days).

Participation in training is mandatory for all regular and parent counsellor families.

The Orientation Program for Foster Families is essential to the pre-assessment process and is provided to all potential foster parent applicants. The program is presented jointly by foster care workers, social workers and trainers who have been approved by the Federation of Foster Families.

At the completion of the Orientation Program for Foster Families, the foster parent applicants may then proceed with their application to foster. Criminal record checks, child abuse register checks, references, medical reports and any other professional reports are requested as the foster care worker proceeds with the foster family home study and the family assessment process. Areas of assessment include health of applicants and other family members, financial management, problem-solving abilities, attitudes and practices towards discipline, parental abilities and relationships, and the general attitudes of children and youth within the current family structure.

Final foster family approval results in the placement of a child or youth. The remainder of the basic mandatory core training must be completed within a two-year period.

Review/Evaluation

The foster home is reviewed six months after approval and annually thereafter. The review includes adjustments to fostering, changes in the family circumstances, and any problems experienced during placement. If deemed necessary, help is provided to assist in the development of family strengths and coping skills.

Appeals/Complaints

Complaints by foster parents who are dissatisfied with a service or case decision are encouraged to follow the agency/district office appeal policy in the complainants' jurisdiction. The Federation of Foster Families of Nova Scotia can offer support during the appeal process.

Allegations of Abuse or Neglect

The protocol for the investigation of allegations of abuse and/or neglect in

foster care establishes the procedures for the child protection investigation. Investigations are conducted by an agency other than the home agency to avoid a conflict of interest or perceived bias. Support can be offered to foster families undergoing an investigation from the foster care worker or through the Foster Allegation support Services Program provided by the Federation of Foster Families of Nova Scotia.

Federation of Foster Families of Nova Scotia

The Federation of Foster Families of Nova Scotia is an organization for foster families run by foster parents to serve and support one another as caregivers to children requiring substitute care. The organization represents approximately 650 approved foster parents in the province and is funded through the Department of Community Services. The Federation, the Executive Director, the office staff, and the local foster family associations promote quality foster care via advocacy, education, information sharing, policy recommendations, and maintaining the lines of communication between foster families, agencies/district offices, and the Department.

Programs are administered by the Federation of Foster Families of Nova Scotia and funded by the Department of Community Services.

The administration and delivery of training, as required for the Introductory Level of Care, is provided by the Federation of Foster Families of Nova Scotia-approved trainers. Expenses for training are reimbursed to foster families through the Federation.

Changes in policy and procedures are relayed to the Federation for distribution to all foster families throughout the Province. Contact the Federation of Foster Families of Nova Scotia by telephone at (902) 424-3071 or by fax at (902) 424-5199 or by e-mail at parkerph@gov.ns.ca.

Insurance Program for Foster Parents

This program provides coverage for extended property damage, comprehensive general liability, and defense costs for foster parents charged with the abuse of a child in care and who are found not guilty or acquitted.

Foster Care Rates

Establishment of Rates

Maintenance expenditures for children in care are reviewed by the Department of Community Services after consultations with agencies, the regions, and the Federation of Foster Families of Nova Scotia, and following approval by the Minister.

Maintenance Expenditures for Children in Care

Additional funds may be provided with prior approval based on policy, to provide services or items needed by children in care, such as therapy, youth alternative workers, tutoring, etc. Special per diem rates are also available to foster families based on the extraordinary needs of the child.

Foster Care Rates
(Effective November 1, 1999)

Board Rates	
Age	***Per Diem***

0-9 years	$13.77
10+ years	20.02
Clothing Allowance	
Age	***Three times per year***
0-4 years	$157.00
5-9 years	259.00
10+ years	362.00
Spending Allowance (Effective March 1, 1999)	
Age	***Monthly***
0-5 years	$10.00
6-11 years	$15.00
12-15 years	$25.00 paid to child
16+ years	$40.00 paid to child
School supplies (Effective March 1, 1999)	
Age	***Annually***
5-9 years	$70.00
10-20 years	120.00
Christmas Allowance (Effective March 1, 1999)	
Age	***Annually***
0-5 years	$100.00
6-10 years	145.00 ($125 for caregiver to buy child's gift, $20 for child to buy gifts)
11-12 years	190.00 ($150 to caregiver to buy child's gift and $40 for child to buy gifts)

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Foster Care Report
September 2000

New Brunswick

Introduction

Foster care is the preferred placement option for most children coming into care. Within each regional office, at least one or more social worker is designated with responsibility for the provision of foster care services in that region. Responsibilities include recruitment; assessment and approval of new applicants; selection of placements; training and other supports to foster parents; evaluations and annual reviews of foster homes; ensuring any complaints/grievances are investigated; and liaison with the local foster families association.

Types of Foster Care

In New Brunswick, there are four types of foster homes approved by the Department of Family and Community Services: regular foster homes, therapeutic foster homes, young offender foster homes and provisional foster homes.

Regular foster homes (including emergency placement homes) are approved for the placement of one or more children in care. Therapeutic foster families are career-oriented or professional foster families that are prepared to combine the skills of child caring with the challenge of developing a competency-based approach for systematically treating specific needs in children. Young Offender foster families are foster families that are able to accommodate youth who have come into conflict with the law and who have certain court-ordered conditions regarding their care. Provisional foster homes are used specifically for a designated child in care - usually a relative, friend or neighbour of the child.

Training and Approval

Following receipt of an application, consultation with the references and a criminal record check, applicants are asked to undergo the P.R.I.D.E. (Parent, Resources, Information and Development) program to help assess their suitability for fostering and to provide them with required information based on essential requirements needed for fostering. Applicants and their family members are then interviewed and a home assessment is conducted.

The decision on whether to approve the foster family must be made within four weeks of completion of the home assessment and within four months of receipt of the application and references. The approval also indicates whether the home is being considered for emergency placement, the maximum number of children to receive foster care services in that home and any stipulations or conditions relevant to that applicant's situation. Most homes are approved for one, two or three children.

As a final step in the screening process, the worker must obtain a health statement from the applicants or their physician, regarding general health, specific illnesses or disabilities and a record of immunization.

Upon approval of a foster home, a "Foster Family Resource Agreement" is signed between the parents and the social worker. The agreement outlines the roles of the foster parents as members of a multidisciplinary team and the role of the Department. All foster parents are also given a manual on foster care and an ID card identifying them as foster parents and providing authorization for minor medical services for a foster child.

Once approved, any foster family (with the exception of provisional foster homes) must attend any training that is available at the regional level. Social workers assigned to provide residential services to children are responsible for the co-ordination and sometimes the delivery of training.

The training deals with the five core competencies of fostering:

1. protecting and nurturing;
2. addressing and meeting children's developmental needs;
3. supporting relationships between children and families;
4. connecting children to safe, nurturing relationships intended to last a lifetime; and
5. working as a member of a professional team.

Approval of a Provisional Foster Home

In the case of provisional homes, conditional approval may be granted and the child placed when the family expresses a desire to accept the child and the social worker visits the home. This visit assesses the health and safety aspects of the home; the child's desire to be placed there; relationships of the family with the child and with her/his parents; and any other factors influencing the safety or development of the child.

The regional office must notify the family that the placement is conditional for 60 days pending full approval. The full approval process - as described above for regular foster homes - must be completed within two months of the placement.

Review/Evaluation

Once the child has been placed, a social worker must contact the foster family, by phone, within three days and visit the child within seven days of placement. The foster family is then contacted within 30 days of the first visit and monthly thereafter, or in accordance with the plan for the child.

Most foster families are evaluated annually. Where a family is fostering a child on a long-term basis or where a child has bonded with the family, the family may be evaluated once every two years after the first two years of caring for the child.

Appeals/Complaints

Complaints or grievances from or against foster parents must be investigated within five working days. Foster parents discuss complaints directly with the regional foster care worker; if this is unsatisfactory, the foster parent may take the matter to the worker's supervisor. If still dissatisfied, the foster parent may request, in writing, a meeting with the Regional Director.

Allegations of Abuse or Neglect

When an allegation of abuse is made against a foster parent, she or he is investigated in accordance with the Department's abuse protocols, in force

since 1987. In the case of sexual or serious physical abuse allegations, a joint investigation with the police is conducted. A neutral worker from Children's Protective Services conducts the investigation. In addition, the foster home worker provides information on the process as it unfolds; keeps the foster family up to date on their status as a resource; and with their consent, may refer the family to a Foster Assistance and support Team (F.A.S.T.) or arrange for other counselling services as necessary. If an allegation is proven false, the Department may provide reasonable reimbursement to the foster family for legal expenses, as well as provide or pay for critical incident stress debriefing.

Foster Families Association of New Brunswick

There is a provincial association as well as local associations in each region of the province. Departmental regional offices encourage the development of and provide funding to the Association in their region. All foster parents automatically become members of the association in their area and are encouraged to contact other members for mutual support. The association is devoted to meeting the following objectives: to work for the improvement of services to the foster child; to promote fellowship among foster families; to provide a forum for training, an exchange of ideas and mutual support; and in conjunction with the Department, to identify and determine the needs and objectives required to improve services to children and to foster families.

Damage Compensation

The Department will consider any request by a foster parent for reimbursement for damage, loss or injury to the foster parent or a third party where the child in care caused the damage. Such incidents must be reported immediately to the social worker.

Foster Care Rates

Establishment of Rates

At least annually, the central office of the Department of Health and Community Services reviews and adjusts foster care rates to take into account the annual cost of living.

Basic Maintenance Rates

The rate paid to foster parents providing care in a regular foster home varies depending on the age of the child and the foster parents' level of competence-based training. Basic maintenance rates are paid for children based on the following age groups: 0-4 years; 5-10 years; and 11 years of age and over. The basic maintenance rate is paid on a monthly basis and covers lodging, food, clothing replacement, personal care, transportation, babysitting, recreation/special occasions and includes the federal Children's Special Allowance. Competency-based rates also vary according to the type of foster home, i.e., a regular foster home, a therapeutic foster home, or a young offenders' foster home.

1. Regular Basic Maintenance Rates (effective April 1, 1999)			
	0-4 years	*5-10 years*	*11 years +*
Food	$110.00	$133.00	$168.00
Lodging	104.00	105.00	107.00
Clothing	31.00	41.00	57.00
Personal Care	13.00	12.00	24.00
Transportation	35.00	35.00	35.00

Babysitting	45.00	45.00	45.00
Recreation/Special Occasions	25.00	30.00	35.00
Federal Children's Special Allowance	135.42	135.42	135.42
Total Monthly Rate	**$498.42**	**$536.42**	**$606.42**
2. Fee for service (paid monthly) according to the type of foster home			
New and provisional foster homes			$0.00
Regular foster homes			$200.00
Therapeutic and young offender foster homes			$516.00

Additional Allowable Expenses

In addition to the basic rates outlined above, foster parents receive an additional allowance for clothing and school supplies. In December, a Christmas Allowance is also provided. A one-time Basic Clothing Allowance may be provided, if required, to children coming into care.

Additional Care Costs

Spring Clothing Allowance - paid in April			
	0-4 years	***5-10 years***	***11 years and older***
Clothing	$65.00	$73.00	$104.00
School Clothing and supply Allowance - paid in August			
	0-4 years	***5-10 years***	***11 years and over***
supplies	-	$120.00	$157.00
Clothing	$53.00	72.00	97.00
Total	**$53.00**	**$192.00**	**$254.00**
School supply Allowance - paid after August			
		Kindergarten - Grade 5	***Grades 6-12***
supplies		$120.00	$157.00
Winter Clothing Allowance - paid in October			
	0-4 years	***5-10 years***	***11 years and over***
Clothing	101.00	134.00	156.00
Christmas Allowance - paid in December			
	0-4 years	***5-10 years***	***11 years and over***
Allowance	$106.00	$113.00	$121.00
Basic Clothing Allowance - may be paid when child enters care			
	0-4 years	***5-10 years***	***11 years and over***
Allowance	up to $190.00	up to $245.00	up to $310.00

Foster parents may be reimbursed for the actual costs incurred for additional items, usually with prior approval from the Department. The types of expenses covered include: health care services; recreation equipment; uniforms; graduation expenses; special lessons; school outings; camping; homemaker services; day care; kindergarten; assessment and counselling; and tutoring. transportation to the doctor, dentist, hospital, etc., may be reimbursed at the rate of 30¢ per kilometre.

Emergency Shelter

Persons providing emergency foster care receive the regular maintenance rates, plus any applicable additional amounts for clothing, recreation and school supplies (as outlined above), and a fixed rate of $23.17 per month for each bed designated for emergency care above the rate already determined based on the foster home's classification.

Substitute Care Arrangements

Group homes are residential facilities owned and operated by an agency or incorporated body. They provide 24-hour care for up to six children displaying physical, intellectual, emotional or behavioural disabilities. The Department of Family and Community Services stipulates certain policies and standards concerning the operation of group homes.

The Independent living Program assists youth in care to acquire the skills needed to live and function independently. The program, which serves youth 15 to 19 years of age, lasts one year.

Specialized treatment resources are provided by the Department to meet the needs of hard to serve children in its care. Where a child's needs cannot be met in New Brunswick, he or she may be referred to an out-of-province treatment facility.

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September 2000

Ontario

Introduction

Foster care services are intended to provide protection, safety, and care to children whose family of origin is unable to provide care for them for various reasons. As the preferred model of out-of-home care, foster care provides children both temporary and longer-term options for child growth, development, and safe, nurturing, and stable relationships in a familial setting.

The Province has directed resources toward the revitalization of foster care services; these resources are intended to strengthen and stabilize the existing foster care system, increase the number of foster care providers available and enhance their competencies, and improve outcomes for children in care.

The Ministry foster care revitalization strategy encompasses key components that include:

- Enhanced daily rates including respite and skill enhancement provisions;
- Foster parent training;
- Provincial recruitment initiative;
- support for regional delivery of some foster care services;
- Outcomes measurement approach for children in care

Ministry funded social services are governed by the *Child and Family Services Act* (*CFSA*), 1985, recently revised as the *Child and Family Services Amendment Act (Child Welfare Reform)*, 2000. Responsibility for the foster care system rests largely with the 53 Children's Aid Societies (five of which are Aboriginal) located throughout the Province of Ontario. Children's Aid Societies (CAS) are independent, non-governmental agencies governed by Boards of Directors responsible for the staff and activities of a particular agency. Provincial legislation defines the mandate to protect children to age 16 years if they are in the society's care or supervision, or until the order expires (up to age 18 years or when the youth marries). The Society may, with the Director's approval, provide care and maintenance up to age 21 years while the child completes a post-secondary education.

The government's role in foster care consists of the overall development of long-term policy and review/coordination of the system, licensing, and funding. Each CAS is responsible for the recruitment, approval, and management of foster homes in its own jurisdiction. For the purposes of licensing, the places where children live have been divided into two separate streams; foster homes and children's residences (also known as "group homes").

Types of Foster Care

A foster home is an approved home in which parent-model care is provided to four or fewer unrelated children, under the supervision of an operator holding a current license to provide foster care services. In the child welfare sector, over half of all children in care are placed in society-operated foster homes and/or

group care. Foster Care is also used for open custody in the young offender system, and must adhere to the same licensing requirements as Society-based placements. It is also possible for an individual/organization to be licensed by the Ministry for the purposes of recruiting/approving/managing foster homes. Often, a service provider will offer this service in affiliation with another licensed residential resource. For example, an individual who provides care through a licensed facility may wish to recruit foster homes where the philosophy of care or religious orientation is consistent with that of the facility. The foster homes managed by the licensee are considered to be "affiliated foster units".

All agency-based foster care or licensees operating affiliated foster units must develop and maintain operational policies and procedures including those related to recruiting, screening and selecting foster parents, a system for supervising foster homes, an annual evaluation system for foster homes, and an up-to-date list of approved homes. While such policies and procedures may differ between individual CASs/licensees, the Ministry has established uniform regulations and guidelines governing the management of foster homes to ensure consistency with the provincial legislation.

Provincial legislation requires that children's services be provided in a manner that respects children's need for continuity of care and stable family relationships, takes into account physical and mental developmental individual differences, and respects cultural, religious, and regional differences. Such care is considered temporary, pending achievement of a permanency plan such as returning to family, placement in the community, an adoptive family, or possibly a decision to remain in longer-term foster care.

Regular Foster Care

Regular foster care refers to the provision on a daily basis of all the essential elements of family life that a child needs. In a regular foster home, the child can quite readily be integrated into the foster family and have his/her needs met by following the family's daily routines.

Specialized Foster Care

Specialized foster care is designed to meet the needs of children with identified developmental, emotional, medical, or physical exceptionalities. The program's primary objective is to accommodate the child with a foster home setting where the child's special needs are addressed on an ongoing basis and in a manner where the child is encouraged to function to his or her maximum potential. It is preferable to have one foster parent providing care and supervision on a full-time basis.

Treatment Foster Care

Treatment foster care is intended to provide placement for children who require community-based treatment to meet their specialized needs. The children will require individual programs developed by their foster parents and work to assist them in modifying behaviour. The program is time-limited and requires foster parents who have the ability to provide programming as well as the family living experience for children. The goal is to address the treatment needs of the child and prepare them for permanent placement. The treatment needs of children require that the program utilize a mix of professional treatment staff and foster parents. It is expected that there is at least one foster parent providing care and treatment on a full-time basis.

Training and Approval

The delivery and design of foster parent training for the 53 Children's Aid

Societies throughout the province are currently under review. A revised training program to meet the needs of agency-based foster parents is expected for release in the winter of 2000. The model is to be based on core competencies and delivered on a local and regional basis.

Training for foster parent(s) will include both "orientation/pre-service" training and core/in-service training. The orientation will provide foster parent applicants with information (including written material) on foster care policies and practices and outline the roles and responsibilities of all parties. The core material will provide training for foster parent(s) who have been processed throughout the approval process and may already have a child placed in their home. Referral and enrolment in a particular training module will be based upon the identified needs of the foster parent and will include topics such as mental and physical health, education, alcohol and other substance abuse, child development, and legal services.

Appeals/Complaints

A representative of the CAS/licensee must respond to any inquiries by or complaints against foster parent(s) within 24 hours, and investigate within five working days. The foster parent(s) must be informed of the investigation outcome within five days thereafter. If a child who is 12 years of age or over objects to a particular placement, the child is entitled to a review by the Residential Placement Advisory Committee.

The Ministry has established a standard outlining the considerations to be taken into account during the investigation of an allegation of abuse involving a CAS foster parent, volunteer or staff member.

Foster Parent Society of Ontario

The Foster Parent Society of Ontario (FPSO) is an incorporated, provincial non-profit organization which represents local foster parent(s) in Ontario. In order to be a member and have a voice at the FPSO level, there must be an established Foster Parent Association (FPA) which pays an annual membership fee of $15 a year per open foster home. The FPSO conference and training sessions are, however, open to non-member foster parent(s) across Ontario. Local and regional voting delegates at an annual association conference elect the executive on an annual basis.

The FPSO maintains contact with both the federal Canadian Foster Family Association and the International Foster Family Association, and has provided input on various local and provincial initiatives and representation on several committees affiliated with the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Society, and the Ministry.

Foster Care Rates

Under the new funding framework announced in 1999, the Ministry established a new minimum daily rate for foster care providers. This revised daily rate structure includes a higher base rate than the previously-established minimum. The basic minimum rate established by the Ministry of Community and Social Services covers food and lodging for a child. It does not include extra costs of clothing, spending allowances and other specialized services that may be needed by children in foster care. Each agency may provide additional funds, at its discretion, to cover extra costs of clothing, spending allowances and other specialized services.

Foster Care Daily Operating Cost Benchmarks

Type of Care	*Daily Rate*	*Basis*
Regular	$32.20/day *	Basic Rate - $25.71
		Respite/Relief - $1.69
		Skill enhancement - $4.80
Specialized	$49.76/day	Basic Rate - $42.18
		Respite/Relief — $2.77
		Skill enhancement - $4.80
Treatment	$67.64/day	Basic Rate - $58.96
		Respite/Relief - $3.88
		Skill enhancement - $4.80
Outside Purchased Care	$67.64/day	

* Benchmark developed using *Federal Child support Guidelines* equivalency scale.

The basic rate for "regular" foster care is prescribed at a minimum of *$25.71* per day. The basic rates for "specialized" and "treatment" foster care, however, are not prescribed. The CASs responsible for applications of the rates have discretion in applying rates beyond that prescribed as the minimum, depending on the identified needs of the child and demonstrated skills of the foster parent (s). The new child welfare funding framework uses a series of "benchmarks" intended as "optimal averages" not intended to be applied to individual cases or situations. The Ministry has established benchmarks for foster care rates as a means of determining agency-funding allocations based on "days of care" provided to children. Each individual agency must then deliver services and develop its own agency operating budgets within its overall funding allocation.

The recognition for respite is built into the total daily rate structure and is at the discretion of the individual CAS. The agency can either pay the foster parent(s) an additional daily rate, and/or utilize funding to provide discretionary supports within the foster care system, as warranted by the circumstances to best meet the needs of the child in the foster home.

The recognition for skill development and experience of the foster parent(s) is built into the skill enhancement provision of the total daily rate structure. The amount of this enhancement will vary between foster parent(s) given their differences in levels of skill and experience at any one time.

Substitute Care Arrangements

Children's Residences/Group Care

Group care provides residential services and associated care and supervision for up to ten children in a parent model or staff model residence. Generally, the facilities are operated by private, incorporated, non-profit organizations. Individual CASs may also operate group homes that receive approval from the Ministry through a service contract that includes a program description and service/financial data targets and are funded as part of the overall CAS budget.

Children with social/emotional/behavioural problems have access to more sophisticated treatment programs provided by personnel such as psychiatrists, nurses and special educators. These programs may include secure treatment programs. Some group homes provide child welfare services to older children in need of protection who do not have major emotional or behavioural problems; generally, these children are on a long-term placement.

Such homes may also be used for short-term placements, such as emergency homes, which accept children on a 24-hour basis to alleviate a crisis situation; as receiving homes, which accommodate children when they first come into

care; or as assessment homes in which staff determine the plan of care for the child.

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Manitoba

Introduction

A foster home is defined in the *Child and Family Services Act* as "a home other than the home of a parent or guardian of a child, in which the child is placed by an agency for care and supervision, but not for adoption". Each mandated agency or regional office of the Department of Family Services is responsible for the development, utilization, maintenance and co-ordination of the foster care program within its jurisdictional boundaries.

Types of Foster Care

In recognition of the needs of children and the varying skills and abilities of foster parents, a continuum of foster care programs is utilized.

General Placement Foster Home

Approved for up to four children, these homes may provide short- or long-term care and may receive a service fee.

Emergency/Receiving Foster Home

These homes are approved for up to four children for short-term placement, pending decisions concerning the child's placement needs, and may have an assessment capacity.

Child Specific Foster Home

This type of foster home is a placement resource for a child in care where the foster parent knows the child. It includes extended family placements.

Staffed Foster Home

Placement resource approved for up to four children where the caregiver is an employee of the agency. Includes "proctor" situations where the employee usually lives with one child and provides a set number of hours of counselling and life skills preparation to the child.

Specialized Foster Home

Approved for up to four children, these homes are usually for long-term placements where the caregiver possesses specific skills in order to deal with the special needs/problems of the children. A Specialized Foster Home receives a service fee as compensation.

Training and Approval

Following an orientation to the foster care program, interested families must undergo an approval process which includes a family assessment, a building review, a medical reference, personal references, an abuse registry check, a prior contact check and a criminal record check. The approval process is completed within 90 days of receipt of the initial enquiry. A foster license is issued to the home indicating the maximum number and sex of children to be accommodated. A foster home must be approved before a child may be placed there.

Agencies are encouraged to provide initial and ongoing training to foster parents. A certificate course in foster care is offered through one of the community colleges.

Review/Evaluation

All foster homes are reviewed at least annually; the home's foster license may be cancelled it if does not conform to departmental standards. The child's service plan contains provisions for review of her/his placement.

Appeals/Complaints

Complaints against a foster home may involve physical conditions, approval standards or service provided. A foster child may place a complaint or foster parents may state complaints or grievances concerning a child in their care or the service they are receiving. All complaints should be made directly to the agency concerned where they are handled through an internal review process. Complaints may also be made to the Director, the Children's Advocate, or the Ombudsman.

Allegations of Abuse or Neglect

A departmental standard describes the process to follow when there is an allegation of abuse made against a member of the foster family where the foster child is currently residing. The standard clarifies the roles of the various workers involved. The responsibility for the investigation, for coordinating any other agency involvement, and for bringing the case to closure resides with the agency that services the geographical area where the foster home is located and who issued the foster license. The foster family receives written confirmation of the results of an investigation and the status of the home within three weeks following the completion of the agency investigation.

Legal services through Legal Aid are available to foster families only when it is clear that a criminal investigation is underway, or criminal charges are actually laid, or when their name is to be listed on the Provincial Child Abuse Registry without a criminal conviction.

Manitoba Foster Family Network

The previous Manitoba Foster Family Association ceased operation in August 1993. A new Network will be functioning by April 2001.

Damage Compensation

The Foster Parent Intentional Damage Compensation Plan is funded by the Province and administered by the Child Protection and support Services Branch of the Department of Family Services and Housing, and the Insurance and Risk Management Branch of the Department of Finance. The plan provides coverage for intentional damage occurring in foster homes/open custody homes and includes an appeal process. It does not cover losses

covered by a comprehensive homeowner's policy, or motor vehicles, aircraft, or other property for which insurers write specific coverage.

Foster homes are not required to have an existing home insurance policy. The plan does have limits on the coverage for specific items, and there is a $100 deductible for each claim. An adjusting firm hired by the plan assesses claims.

Foster parents are covered by liability insurance if an action is brought against them by a third party as a result of a foster child's action, either under an agency's third party liability insurance policy, or under the province of Manitoba's general liability policy. They also have access to legal counsel through Legal Aid in these situations.

Foster Care Rates

Establishment of Rates

Manitoba's basic maintenance rates for foster care are authorized annually by the provincial treasury Board. The rate includes two components: a portion paid directly to foster parents, and a portion retained by the mandated agencies (including the five regional offices of the Department of Family Services responsible for foster care) to disburse on behalf of children, based on their needs. In addition, agencies have available to them, in the form of a grant, monies to cover service fees and other special care costs.

Basic Maintenance Rates

The basic maintenance rate is intended to cover the costs identified through a Chart of Accounts; components are shown on the following page. In recognition of the increased costs of living in northern communities, rates for communities north of 53° are higher.

Per Diem Rates
(Effective July 1, 2000)

	South of 53 degrees		*North of 53 degrees (road access)*		*North of 53° East of Lake Winnipeg (no road access)*	
Components	***Child 0-10 yrs***	***Child 11-17 yrs***	***Child 0-10 yrs***	***Child 11-17 yrs***	***Child 0-10 yrs***	***Child 11-17 yrs***
Household allowance	$0.44	$0.44	$0.46	$0.46	$0.46	$0.46
Bedding and linen	0.45	0.45	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.47
Repairs and equipment	0.88	0.98	0.92	1.03	0.92	1.03
Utilities	1.04	1.04	1.09	1.09	1.09	1.09
Food	5.41	6.87	5.95	7.56	7.84	9.96
Health and personal care	0.51	0.80	0.54	0.84	0.54	0.84
Transportation	1.53	1.53	1.60	1.60	1.60	1.60
Respite	1.77	1.77	1.87	1.87	1.87	1.87
Replacement clothing	1.80	2.24	1.89	2.36	1.89	2.36
Personal allowance	0.65	1.50	0.68	1.57	0.68	1.57
Babysitting/child care	1.16	1.16	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22
Damages/Deductibles	0.91	1.77	0.97	1.84	0.97	1.84
Total to Foster Parent	**$16.55**	**$ 20.55**	**$ 17.66**	**$ 21.91**	**$ 19.55**	**$ 24.31**
Agency Allowance [1]						
Gifts	0.27	0.27	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28
Activities, education,						

special occasion, etc.	1.09	1.09	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14
Agency Allowance Sub-total	**$ 1.36**	**$ 1.36**	**$ 1.42**	**$ 1.42**	**$ 1.42**	**$1.42**
Total Rate	**$17.91**	**$ 21.91**	**$ 19.08**	**$ 23.33**	**$ 20.97**	**$ 25.73**
[1]Agencies are allocated a global fund for specific child-related items based on the child's needs. These discretionary items do not result in an automatic payment to foster parents.						

Additional Allowable Expenses

Upon prior approval by a worker, and/or submission of the applicable bills, foster parents may receive payment for additional costs. In addition, the costs of homemaker services, transportation, and special medical items may be covered in special circumstances.

Special Rate Provisions

A service fee is provided when extra services are required to meet the high needs of the child; this is known as special rate foster care. The amount paid is determined using a point rating system based on the child's special needs.

Substitute Care Arrangements

Residential care resources include group homes and treatment centres. Group homes, which may accept between four and eight children, provide care and treatment for children, ranging predominantly from 12- to 18-year-olds, whose needs cannot be adequately met in a substitute family setting. These children have usually experienced a range of abuse and/or neglect and exhibit emotional or behavioural difficulties as a result. Treatment centres provide similar services to six or more children. In addition, clinical assessment and support services are available to the residents.

Residential care placements are managed through a provincial placement desk which priorizes all referrals for residential placement. Universal per diem rates are provided on the basis of the number of residents, the size of the facility and the geographical location. A facility at any level may be designated as a receiving home, to be used for emergency placements. Receiving homes receive a combination of grants and per diem funding, which generally represents fixed and variable costs.

Independent living programs are available for youth 16 to 18 years of age who have demonstrated a willingness and some ability to move into independence with supports.

The Youth Emergency Crisis Stabilization System (YECSS) was established in 1997/98 with funds redirected from the closure of Seven Oaks Centre, a reception facility used for high-risk children. YECSS provides services on a 24 hour basis. These services include:

- Intake
- Mobile crisis capability (mobile crisis teams consisting of a clinically-trained person and a youth care worker)
- Crisis stabilization units (one six-bed facility for boys; one six-bed unit for girls)
- Brief treatment capability for children/families at the time of or following the crisis until the regular system can respond
- Case management function, particularly where the child/family is in crisis for a longer period of time and where the regular system is unable

to meet the child/family's needs
- Home-based crisis support/homemaker services.

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Saskatchewan

Introduction

The first priority of the Department of Social Services is to maintain children with their family where it is safe to do so, and when this is not possible, to place them in the care of an extended family. When a child must be placed in the care of the Minister, a foster home is the preferred placement. Foster care is a child protective service provided within the Department's Family-Centred Case Management approach.

Types of Foster Care

Saskatchewan's foster parent program includes four levels of foster care: intern, practitioner, specialist, and therapeutic. There are also emergency homes. Standards regarding support, training, case planning, and respite are being developed for the practitioner, specialist and therapeutic homes to ensure provincial program consistency.

Intern Foster Care

Intern foster families have completed pre-service training and have been approved after the home study. They can accept their first foster child but must complete the practitioner level training within two years.

Practitioner Foster Care

About 80% of foster homes are practitioner level homes. Daily care is provided to children without severe emotional or behavioural problems. A maximum of eight children, including the natural children of the foster parents, may be cared for in one home.

Specialist Foster Care

Specialist foster care may be used as a placement for children who cannot be managed in a practitioner foster home or a group home and for whom an institutional placement is inappropriate. Some children 12 years of age or older may require a period of residential (institutional) treatment but the availability of a specialist foster home shortens this period considerably.

Therapeutic Foster Care

Therapeutic foster care homes provide services to children who require intensive one-to-one support and counselling as an alternative to residential treatment. These homes operate as a cluster of homes so that they can provide respite to each other. A worker is on call 24 hours a day for the cluster. Only one child can be placed in any therapeutic foster care home at any time.

Emergency/Receiving Foster Homes

The regional director designates these. They must be available on a 24-hour basis and may receive up to 12 hours' notice prior to a placement. A maximum of eight children, including the natural children of the foster parents, may be cared for in one home. Where designated emergency homes are not available, practitioner foster care homes may be used.

Training and Approval

The Department of Social Services has a formal mandatory foster care training program which was developed by the Department and the Saskatchewan Foster Parent Association, with the assistance of the School of Social Sciences at Nova University, Florida. The program combines approval of foster parent applicants with pre-service and practitioner level training. Training is provided by specially-trained teams made up of one caseworker and one experienced foster parent and is available across the province. Three themes are emphasized throughout the program: teamwork, dealing with separation and grief, and working with the natural family. Topics range from impact of the placement, cultural awareness, family dynamics, and behaviour management, to alcohol and drug abuse. In a two-parent home, both parents must take the training.

Persons interested in fostering are given a three-hour orientation, at the end of which they decide whether or not to fill out an application and proceed with a six-module (24-hour) pre-service training package. While the applicants are completing the pre-service package, a home study report is done. The home study generally takes from three to four months and includes self-assessment, several interviews, reference checks, and completion of a medical report. A criminal records investigation is required. Issues discussed during the home study are varied - use of alcohol and drugs, physical and emotional problems of applicant(s), marital problems, finances, previous involvement with child protection services, disclosure of physical or sexual abuse, child management practices, fire safety standards, and housing guidelines. This home study report is shared with the applicants. Persons not suited to fostering generally select themselves out.

A foster family that is approved at the end of the pre-service training and home study becomes an intern family and it may take in its first foster child. The intern couple is then required to complete the ten module (40-hour) practitioner level of training within two years. If it is not completed in two years, the couple will not be retained as foster parents after the children in their care leave the home. Advanced training for therapeutic foster care parents is now available as well.

Review/Evaluation

An annual written review of each foster home is done by a caseworker, reviewed with the foster parents and signed by them.

Appeals/Complaints

A specific conflict resolution procedure has been established jointly by the Department and the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association (SFFA).

If, when a conflict arises between foster parents and departmental staff, the foster parents are not satisfied with discussions with the caseworker, they must notify the worker who informs the supervisor. If a meeting with the supervisor is unsuccessful, the parents may request a meeting with the regional director. Regional committees composed of departmental and SFFA personnel select support persons who are trained to mediate when discussion of problems between foster parents and staff include regional directors and/or supervisors.

If the problem is not resolved at the regional level, the foster parents and support person may contact the chairperson of the provincial support committee. The chairperson may refer the matter to the Executive Director of the SFFA who arranges a review. Participants include the foster parents, support person, Executive Director of SFFA, caseworker, supervisor, regional director, and Executive Director of Family and Youth Services Division or a designate. No more than five days can elapse between each step in this process.

Allegations of Abuse or Neglect

When a complaint of abuse or neglect is received about a foster parent, it must be investigated immediately by a caseworker. The investigation must be completed in 30 days. If there appears to be a basis for the complaint, the police are notified immediately.

Saskatchewan Foster Families Association

The Saskatchewan Foster Families Association (SFFA) works closely with the Department of Social Services to promote public recognition of fostering, to strengthen recruitment and support of foster parents, to improve care for foster children, and to deliver the orientation and training packages to new foster parents. All approved foster parents automatically become members. The Association is run by a provincial board of directors and operates through 16 local associations. Each departmental regional office has a caseworker who is designated as the liaison with the local SFFA branch. The SFFA is funded through a departmental grant.

Damage Compensation

Foster parents must carry insurance on their property and possessions to be eligible for coverage under the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association's insurance rider. The rider applies when a claim is not collectible under regular insurance due to the criminal or wilful act of a foster child.

In exceptional circumstances, when a claim is not otherwise collectible, the Department may pay compensation for damage caused by children in care. The Department will also pay all or part of any deductibles, depending on the number of previous claims in a year.

Foster Care Rates

Establishment of Rates

Foster care rates are reviewed periodically by the Minister of Social Services and are authorized and paid through the regional offices. Basic maintenance rates are based on a 1993 independent study, "The Cost of Raising a Child in Saskatchewan". There have been cost of living adjustments since 1993.

Basic Maintenance Rates

The basic maintenance rate is paid to intern and practitioner foster care parents who provide daily care to children with a variety of needs. Intern foster parents have been approved after completing pre-service training and have one year to complete the practitioner level training. The basic maintenance rate is intended to cover food, clothing, education, personal care, transportation, household expenses, recreation and a spending allowance.

Basic Maintenance Rates
(Effective April 1, 1998)

Northern Regions	<1 year	1-5 years	6-11 years	12-15 years	16-17 years
Food	$152.42	$145.16	$195.81	$223.83	$261.11
Clothing	177.85	44.21	66.92	72.46	97.71
Education	6.59	6.59	13.17	13.17	13.17
Personal Care	-	11.52	10.85	31.14	40.53
Transportation	60.68	60.68	60.68	60.68	60.68
Household Operations	97.63	109.27	107.95	107.95	107.95
Recreation	-	29.45	48.36	59.65	70.63
Monthly Total	**$495.17**	**$ 406.88**	**$ 503.74**	**$ 568.88**	**$ 651.78**
Per Diem Rate[1]	**$16.51**	**$13.56**	**$16.79**	**$18.96**	**$21.73**
For youth attending university or vocational school					
Spending					$65.00/month
Personal					$35.00/month

Southern Regions	<1 year	1-5 years	6-11 years	12-15 years	16-17 years
Food	$151.60	$116.39	$152.73	$173.88	$193.31
Clothing	170.90	43.97	64.18	70.49	97.71
Education	5.49	5.49	10.98	10.98	10.98
Personal Care	-	7.60	7.30	24.98	32.39
Transportation	56.36	56.36	56.36	56.36	56.36
Household Operations	97.63	109.27	107.97	107.97	107.97
Recreation	-	29.45	48.31	59.65	70.63
Monthly Total	**$481.98**	**$ 368.53**	**$ 447.83**	**$ 504.31**	**$ 569.35**
Per Diem Rate[1]	**$16.07**	**$12.28**	**$14.93**	**$16.81**	**$18.98**
For youth attending university or vocational school					
Spending					$60.00/month
Personal					$30.00/month

1. Per diem totals have been calculated based on a 30-day month.
Note: Spending allowance is included in the categories of food, personal care and recreation. It is expected that an allowance will be given to each child for his or her own use. The following rates are provided as guidelines only. The actual rate will vary from family to family.

	1-5 years	6-11 years	12-15 years	16 + years
Monthly Spending Allowance Guideline Rates (North and South)	$5.00	$16.00	$30.00	$34.00

In addition to the basic maintenance rate, a Skill Development Fee of $100/month per child is paid to all approved practitioner foster parents who have completed training and are not already receiving a fee-for-service (see below) greater than $100/month.

Additional Allowable Expenses

Payments are also available for children with special needs, on a request basis, to cover items such as training expenses, babysitting and respite care costs. Actual costs are covered for items such as medical travel, school supplies, sports or musical equipment and clothing purchased at the time of admission to care, as required.

Special Rate Provisions

Fee-for-Service

In addition to the basic maintenance payments, a fee may be paid for the care of children with increased needs resulting from physical or behavioural difficulties. Fees may range from $100 to $500/month.

In some cases, an Exceptional Fee may be paid for children with very extreme physical or medical conditions.

Respite

All foster families are now eligible for a basic level of respite.

Therapeutic Foster Care

Therapeutic foster care homes are used as placements for children whose needs cannot be met in a practitioner foster care home or a group home, and for whom an institutional placement is inappropriate. Therapeutic foster homes provide services to children who require intensive one-to-one support and counselling. Therapeutic parents receive advanced training. Payment is based on completion of training and years of experience. The rate covers basic maintenance, skill development fee and special needs. Respite is provided.

Therapeutic Foster Care Rates
(Effective April 1, 1998)

	Per Diem
Therapeutic foster care	$40.38 to $54.32

Emergency/Receiving Home Rates

There are specific per diem rates for emergency placement homes which are paid when the child is in the home.

Emergency/Receiving Home Rates
(Effective April 1, 1998)

Age	*Per Diem*
0-11 years (Maximum stay 15 days)	$28.58
12 years and over (Maximum stay 15 days)	$40.25

Substitute Care Arrangements

Non-governmental organizations operate 13 group homes that provide care to youth, generally between 14 and 16 years of age. Most homes provide care for five to six children, with programs emphasizing adult involvement and guidance. Homes are funded by the Department of Social Services on an annual contract basis.

Government-run residential facilities provide care to older children, generally 10 years of age or more. Facilities provide structured 24-hour care. Two northern community-operated residential facilities provide services for younger children. In addition, the Ranch Ehrlo Society provides private residential treatment to youth with severe behavioural problems. The Society operates eight group homes, some of which provide specialized treatment services. The Department funds the facilities on a per diem basis.

Independent living arrangements may be provided for youth in care 16 years of age or more.

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Foster Care Report
September 2000

Alberta

Introduction

Alberta's Foster Care program is based on the belief that a family unit and parent model are the most desirable for child rearing. The foster family provides a supportive, healthy atmosphere that facilitates positive functioning for the child. Foster care is viewed as supplemental care when the child's natural family is unable or unwilling to assume full responsibility for the child. Alberta's Child and Family Service Authorities are responsible for placing children in foster homes best suited to their needs and for providing financial and emotional support to foster parents.

In April 1999, 18 Child and Family Service Authorities (CFSA's) assumed responsibility for all direct Child Welfare services delivered in the province. The Foster Care program described below is administered by the Authorities while standards of service are monitored by both the individual Authorities and a Monitoring and Evaluation Branch of the Ministry.

In Alberta, CFSA's provide foster care in two ways: the Authorities recruit, train and support their own foster parents, according to the Foster Care Model, and the Authorities contract with private agencies for General and treatment Foster Care.

The Foster Care Model

The Foster Care Model consists of three different foster home classifications: Approved, Qualified and Advanced. Each classification reflects the qualifications and level of skills of the foster family. Any classification of foster family having the skills or ability and interest can provide specialized foster care to a child.

Approved Foster Care

This provides care for children whose problems can be resolved with quality care and specific supports and/or who have minor disabilities. The maximum number of children per home is three.

Qualified Foster Care

This provides care for children who require both developmental care and professional resources to resolve or meet the needs of a moderate disability. The maximum number of children permitted is three.

Advanced Foster Care

This provides care for children presenting serious emotional or behavioural problems, medical conditions, physical or mental handicaps who are at risk of requiring institutional care. The maximum number of children permitted is two.

Specialized Foster Care

This provides care for children with many problems that are frequent, intense and enduring who would normally require treatment in a residential treatment or nursing facility. These include children with extreme emotional/behavioural problems, severe psychiatric problems, or children who are medically fragile. A maximum of one child is allowed.

In addition to the above, the following types of foster care are still available:

Specified Foster Homes

These are homes approved for a specific child or children where a relationship already exists with the child. The home is closed when the child leaves.

Emergency Homes

Emergency homes are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to provide emergency care to children. Emergency homes are paid the appropriate basic maintenance and skill fees.

Training and Approval

All families applying to foster must complete the pre-service training. Once approved, all foster parents must complete the approved training program within two years. If a family wishes to move along the foster care continuum, they must complete the corresponding training. training to provide specialized care is individualized to meet the needs of the child.

The approval process involves a confirmation that the applicant is 18 years of age or older; a Child Welfare Information System check (for past abuse or neglect); three reference checks; a medical report; a home assessment; a school report if the applicant(s) has (have) children to confirm there are no significant school concerns; a list of agencies the applicant fostered with before, if any; and a criminal record check. The home study assesses attitudes, values and potential to foster and is the deciding factor in determining an applicant's suitability. The criminal record check is conducted prior to the home study.

The screening and approval process should not extend beyond 60 days after the applicant completes pre-service training. All applicants are advised in writing of the Department's decision. Approved applicants are advised of their foster home classification, the number of beds approved and the age and sex of children approved for placement. Applicants who are refused must be advised of the reason and of their right to appeal to the internal administrative review or the Appeal Panel.

Agency General and treatment Foster Care

The General Foster Care Program, offered by a number of agencies, provides services to children whose problems can be resolved with developmental care, specific supports, and/or professional resources to resolve or meet their mild or moderate needs.

All General foster parent applicants must take 18 hours of pre-service training, which is designed to help applicants make an informed decision about whether to pursue fostering. Following the pre-service training, the agency must offer foster parents the equivalent to the Ministry and CFSA's Approved training, according to the Foster Care Model, within two years of approval.

The treatment Foster Care Program provides services to children with complicated service needs because of serious emotional or behavioural problems, medical conditions, mental disorders or physical or mental handicaps.

All inexperienced treatment Foster Care applicants must take 21 hours of pre-service training, followed by 130 hours of training over the first two years for the primary caregiver and over four years for the secondary caregiver. Treatment Foster parents are also required to take 30 hours of in-service training per year after the 130-hour training component is completed. There is also a requirement to attend some other specialized training.

The approval process is the same as for the General Foster Care Program with some additional emphasis on assessing the applicant's personal suitability to offer care and treatment to the children referred for placement.

Review/Evaluation

Foster homes must be reassessed where changes have occurred in the home that may impact on foster care services provided (e.g., move, new child, etc.). Each adult living in the home must provide the results of a criminal record check every three years. All foster homes must be evaluated annually to ensure they are meeting program standards. Homes that are found to be unsatisfactory may be closed, put on a six-month probationary period or suspended for up to six months. If a home is closed, the foster family must be advised in writing of the reasons for the closure.

Appeals/Complaints

Foster parents may appeal the Department's refusal to accept an application for foster care or withdrawal of approved foster home status. In addition, a foster parent who has cared for a child for six months or more may appeal a child's removal from the home. A child may appeal his placement in or removal from a foster home.

In April 1991, the Protocols and Guidelines for Resolution of Issues in Foster Care were implemented. These outline the procedures to be followed where there is a disagreement between the foster parent and social worker or the foster parent has concerns regarding a practice issue or the child's services plan.

Allegations of Abuse or Neglect

A child welfare worker, child in care or other person may lodge a complaint about the services a child is receiving, or allege neglect or abuse. In all cases of alleged neglect or abuse, the Children's Advocate must be notified. Child welfare staff determine whether an investigation is needed; if so, it is conducted by staff with no involvement in the case. Foster families who are accused of abuse or neglect are referred to the Foster Allegation support Team (F.A.S.T.) for support.

Alberta Foster Parent Association

The Alberta Foster Parent Association (AFPA) is a non-profit society that was registered in 1974 to act as the collective voice and central resource for all foster parents in Alberta. The AFPA has membership throughout Alberta and represents foster parents on an individual, local, regional and provincial level. The over 40 district associations are represented by 15 Regional Directors, four of which are Aboriginal, that have been elected by the foster parents in their

region to sit on the Provincial AFPA Board of Directors. This structure enables the AFPA to work closely with Alberta Children's Services at all levels throughout the province. The AFPA is a member of the Canadian Foster Family Association.

Damage Compensation

The basic maintenance rate includes an amount to cover extra household insurance. In addition, Alberta Children's Services provides funds to the Alberta Foster Parent Association for a rider policy to cover certain wilful damage by a foster child. This rider policy covers only those items not covered by the foster parents' own policy. A foster parent who can demonstrate that every reasonable effort to obtain insurance was unsuccessful may request an ex gratia payment.

Foster Care Rates

Establishment of Rates

Alberta's basic maintenance rates for foster care are reviewed on an ad hoc basis by the Minister of Alberta Children's Services. Child and Family Services Authorities and First Nations Child Welfare Agencies are responsible for delivering foster care services.

Basic Maintenance Rates

Basic maintenance rates are intended to cover the costs of food, personal care needs, spending money for the foster child, and household items (i.e., to cover general wear and tear) including insurance premiums, clothing and miscellaneous items (e.g., mileage for appointments or special events and gifts).

Foster Care Rates
(Effective April 1, 1998)

Age	*Per Diem*
0-1 year	$13.15
2-5 years	14.70
6-8 years	16.13
9-11 years	17.02
12-15 years	19.29
16-17 years	22.06

Additional Allowance Expenses

Additional costs may be covered, with the approval of the social worker. Allowable expenses may include:

a. educational costs such as school pictures, bus passes, student union and locker fees, tutoring costs, etc.;
b. homemaker support services to foster parents in special circumstances;
c. special medical items, such as artificial limbs, prosthetic devices, hearing aids or other such items;
d. summer camp fees or other holiday expenses (up to $134.00 per child per year);
e. recreation and cultural funds.

All medical, hospital, optometric and basic dental services are also covered

through the province's Health Care Insurance Plan and a treatment Services Card is issued on behalf of the child.

Skill Fees/Special Rate Provision

The four classifications of foster care are differentiated by the foster parents' training and experience, and by the type of service provided. Children are matched with a foster home on the basis of the family's ability to meet the child's needs. Effective July 1, 1994, the skill fees have been set at the following per child per diem rates:

Approved Foster Care - $4.75 Qualified Foster Care - $10.50 Advanced Foster Care - $23.00 Specialized Foster Care - negotiated on an individual basis.

Skill fees are paid in addition to the basic maintenance rates.

Substitute Care Arrangements

Alberta's residential resources provide specialized services with professional staff. Group care provides out-of-family care in a community setting. Residential facilities provide a continuously supervised environment for children with multiple problems who cannot be placed in a family setting. The supported Independent living Program assists youth in moving towards independence. Secure treatment facilities provide the most intensive care to children who are considered to be a threat to themselves or others.

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September 2000

British Columbia

Introduction

Foster families provide substitute parenting in a family home for children in the charge, care, custody or guardianship of "a director" designated under Section 91 of the *Child, Family and Community Service Act*. The goal for children in foster care is to return them to their own families, wherever possible, or to plan for permanency through adoption. This goal may be met successfully when there is a co-operative partnership between the foster family, the child's family and staff of the Ministry for Children and Families. Each foster family is the administrative responsibility of the regional office in whose jurisdiction it is located.

Types of Care Settings

Range of Care Setting Options

A child in the charge, care, custody or guardianship of the director must be placed in a director-approved resource. The director chooses from two main types of directly funded residential services: family care homes and specialized residential services.

Family Care Homes

Family care is the out-of-home living arrangement which most closely replicates the preferred environment for a child's upbringing. Most family care homes offer interim substitute parenting to children while supporting important relationships of children to their parents and extended families.

Additional Ministry services are available to family care homes on an as-needed basis according to each child's comprehensive plan of care. The type of service offered and its intensity varies according to the level of the home and the needs of the children placed.

There are five kinds of family care homes: restricted family care, regular family care, and specialized family care, Levels 1, 2, and 3.

All types of family care homes may provide respite and relief services (relief services are discussed in detail later under Relief or Respite Care). Restricted family care homes may provide respite or relief only for a child already approved to reside in that home.

Restricted Family Care

Restricted family care homes are director-approved families who provide care for a child already known or related to them. Approval is restricted to the specific child placed in the home, and terminates when that child leaves or is discharged from care. A restricted home may be re-approved if the child previously in care at that home returns to it, or to provide respite or relief

services for that child.

Regular Family Care

Regular family care homes are director-approved families who provide care for children of varying ages and needs. Unlike restricted family care homes, the child placed in the home is not normally already known to the caregiver.

Specialized Family Care Homes

Specialized family care homes provide care in a family setting for children placed by the director; these children may present moderately to extremely challenging behaviour or developmental delay. Each of the three levels of specialized family care homes has specific approval, experience, training requirements, and Level 2 and 3 homes may also provide specialized assessment and intervention services.

Specialized Residential Services

Specialized residential services include bed subsidy homes, group homes, staffed/specialized residential child care resources, intensive child care resources, receiving, assessment and planning programs and treatment foster home programs. A non-profit society, private agency or an individual may operate them.

Bed Subsidy Homes

The Ministry on an annual or more frequent basis contracts bed subsidy home services with private individuals or non-profit societies. Generally, the services include only basic care and nurturing. Services are characteristically provided on a 24-hour basis, with guaranteed emergency placement for individuals or family groups.

Under exceptional circumstances, when it is clearly in the best interests of a child, a bed subsidy home may be used as a family care home.

A bed subsidy home may have capacity for between one and six children.

Group Homes

Group home services are contracted on an annual or more frequent basis with private individuals (private group homes) or non-profit societies (society-operated group homes).

Generally, group home core services include 24-hour skilled parenting and child care services, a structured family model, group and individual counselling and activities, and programming for individual children designed to achieve the specific goals of the child's comprehensive plan of care.

In addition to these core services, individual group homes may also offer certain specialized services such as receiving services, longer term care, or respite and relief care.

A group home may have capacity for between three and eight children.

Receiving, Assessment, and Planning Programs

Receiving, assessment, and planning programs are residential, but may also

include outreach services to a family and other community agencies involved in the family's life. Programs are usually located in the local community in order to allow easy access to the child's family and other community resources, as well as immediate response capacity for emergency placements.

Services provided are time-limited and are generally aimed at assisting the director in formulating a plan of care for the child.

Intensive Child Care Resources (ICCRs)

ICCRs provide short-term, intensive, individualized services and programs to children with severe and profound behavioural and/or emotional disorders.

Children receiving ICCR services normally require an inter-disciplinary team approach involving the co-operative involvement of several community agencies and/or government ministries.

Staffed/Specialized Residential Child Care Programs

Staffed/specialized residential care programs offer 24-hour care for children for whom a comprehensive plan of care has been developed in which specific goals and expected outcomes have been identified. Services are generally time-limited and are aimed at achieving the goals established in the individual child's comprehensive plan of care. A variety of approaches may be used, as long as there is a system in place for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of each child's progress. In some cases, these programs offer community-based, long-term, specialized services for children whose basic care needs are such that they require specialized care until adulthood or beyond.

Among the services in this category are wilderness/ranch programs. These are residential and, because of their remote location, may operate to a large extent as self-contained communities. Services are usually focused on learning to live co-operatively, learning social, educational, life and survival skills, and learning to cope with success and failure. All wilderness/ranch programming is time-limited. A given resource may offer several scheduled programs during the year, and the starting and finishing times of the programs may be staggered according to the needs of the individual children.

Therapeutic Network Home Programs

Therapeutic network home programs offer services similar to staffed/residential programs. However, in a therapeutic network home program, the director provides the contracted caregiver with written authorization (including specific conditions) to sub-contract with other caregivers for the provision of direct services to be received by children placed in a therapeutic network home program.

Generally, a foster family may not have more than six children, including the foster parents' own children. No more than two of the six children may be under two years of age.

Training and Approval

Provided the references, criminal record check, medical report and home study are satisfactory, the district supervisor will, on the recommendation of the resource worker, approve the home for placement. Where a home is found to be unsuitable, the Ministry advises the applicants in writing of its decision. The applicants have the opportunity to have the district office's decision reviewed the regional executive director (or designate).

Once a family care home is approved, a Family Care Home Agreement is signed by both the family care providers and the director (or delegate). The agreement for Regular Family Care Homes (and level one) is renewed every three years, whereas a Restricted Family Care Home agreement is valid for one year only. Specialized Family Care Home Agreements, levels 2 and 3, are renewed every 18 months.

All foster parents must participate in an 18-hour pre-service orientation program prior to their first placement. In addition, newly-approved foster parents are required to complete 53 hours of the BC Foster Care Education Program offered through the provincial community college. The 53 hours of education are to be completed within 2 years of approval. Thereafter, the local foster parent association offers workshops to help family care providers develop their parenting skills. The director may also provide funding to individual family care providers to meet additional training needs.

Review/Evaluation

All family care homes undergo an annual review (includes assessment of adherence to Standards for Foster Homes) to ensure a high quality of care. Reviews occur within 30 days of the anniversary date of approval. Reviews include a file review and a home visit where the family care providers are interviewed.

Where a family care home has been inactive for six months or more, a review of the home must be conducted to determine if it should be kept open.

Appeals/Complaints

Disagreements between individual foster parents and social workers are dealt with by a protocol developed jointly by the BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations and the Ministry. The protocol was revised in November 1999.

All children in care have specific legal rights under the *Child, Family and Community Service Act*. Allegations of abuse of these rights may be taken to the provincial Children's Commissioner. Children in care also have access to the Child, Youth and Family Advocate, Office of the Ombudsman, and Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner.

Youth in care may also turn for assistance and support from the active, provincially-funded Federation of BC Youth In Care Networks organization which represents the views of youth in care on both an individual and systemic basis.

Allegations of Abuse or Neglect

Any allegations of child abuse in a family care home must be reported immediately to the director. The Ministry and the Federation have jointly developed a protocol for investigating such reports. It was last revised in November 1999. The revised Foster Homes Protocols document now includes three protocols: investigating reports of abuse or neglect; reviewing quality of care concerns; and resolving issues between foster parents and the ministry staff. Copies are available on request.

British Columbia Federation of Foster Parent Associations (BCFFPA)

This registered, non-profit association maintains a working partnership with and is funded by the Ministry for Children and Families. It develops, co-ordinates

and implements training programs, assists foster parents through support and consultation, improves public understanding and actively recruits family care homes. The federation encourages foster parents, social workers and other interested people to work together to improve services for children. The Federation consists of representatives from the local and regional foster parent associations, with regional co-ordinators reporting to the regional councils. The Ministry provides grants for training, newsletters, the development of local associations and other support functions. The Federation employs an executive director, education consultant and several support staff.

Insurance

The British Columbia Federation of Foster Parent Associations has a group insurance rider for extended property damage caused by a child placed by the director. This rider is limited to the extent of the foster parents' current property damage coverage. In addition, there is a third-party liability policy that covers all foster parents related to actions taken in carrying out their fostering responsibilities. The Ministry for Children and Families funds the insurance coverage through an agreement with the Federation. All foster parents with a signed agreement are automatically covered; this coverage is in addition to their regular insurance policy. Where a foster child damages a foster parent's property, the social worker is to be contacted immediately.

Motor vehicles used to transport children placed by the director must have at least $1 million third party legal liability coverage.

In addition, a new revised Family Care Home agreement introduced in June 2000 includes legal representation for foster parents who are accused in criminal or civil court of physical, sexual or emotional abuse. Legal representation ceases at the point a foster parent is found guilty or at fault in a court of law.

Family Care Rates

Establishment of Rates

Basic maintenance and clothing rates are reviewed regularly by the Ministry for Children and Families. (Note: The following rate structure is currently under review in a joint process with the BC Federation of Foster Parents Associations.)

A. Restricted and Regular Family Care Homes

Rates

Restricted and Regular Family Care Homes both receive the following all-inclusive payments: Basic Family Care Costs plus Additional Family Care Costs. Regular Family Care Homes also receive an additional "Acknowledgement Standard" payment which recognizes the additional skills which regular family care parents require to care for children not known to them, children of different ages and needs, and children with less background history and information than children placed in Restricted Homes.

The Basic Family Care Costs cover: food; household allowance; transportation; clothing, health, personal care, supplies for young children; and family recreational outings.

The Additional Family Care Costs cover: transportation (child-specific costs); equipment; personal allowance; in-home services; education; and gifts and

activities.

The Acknowledgement Standard, paid to Regular Family Care Homes only, is in recognition of their skill level (as described above).

Family Care Rates
(Effective January 1, 1996)

Restricted Family Care Homes						
	Basic Family Care Costs		***Additional Family Care Costs***		***Restricted Family Care Rate***	
Age	***monthly***	***per diem[1]***	***monthly***	***per diem[1]***	***monthly***	***per diem[1]***
0—11	$379.75	$12.66	$194.56	$6.49	$574.31	$19.15
12-19	$474.42	$15.81	$194.56	$6.49	$668.98	$22.30

Regular Family Care Homes								
	Basic Family Care Costs		***Additional Family Care Costs***		***Acknowledgement Standard***		***Regular Family Care Rate***	
Age	***monthly***	***per diem[1]***	***monthly***	***per diem[1]***	***monthly***	***per diem[1]***	***monthly***	***per diem[1]***
0 - 11	$379.75	$12.66	$194.56	$6.49	$63.46	$2.12	$637.77	$21.26
12-19	$474.42	$15.81	$194.56	$6.49	$63.46	$2.12	$732.44	$24.42

[1]Based on a 30 day month.

Family Care Rate Breakdown

	0 - 11 years		***12 - 19 years***	
	Monthly	***Per Diem***	***Monthly***	***Per Diem***
Basic Family Care Costs				
Food	$105.34	$3.51	$146.18	$4.87
Housing	118.19	3.94	145.66	4.85
Transportation	51.76	1.73	61.38	2.05
Personal Needs	12.69	42	16.02	.53
Recreation	28.51	.95	30.79	1.03
Clothing	63.26	2.11	74.39	2.48
Total Basic Family Care costs	**$379.75**	**$ 12.66**	**$ 474.42**	**$ 15.81**
Additional Family Care Costs				
Transportation	$39.54	$1.32	$39.54	$1.33
Equipment (recreation, cultural, etc.)	23.72	.80	$31.31	1.04
Child's allowance	21.85	.72	$31.73	1.06
Babysitting, Relief	58.78	1.96	$36.63	1.22
Gifts, activities	39.54	1.32	$39.54	1.32
Education	11.13	37	$15.81	.52
Total Additional Family Care costs	**$194.56**	**$ 6.49**	**$ 194.56**	**$ 6.49**
Family Care Rate	**$574.31**	**$ 19.15**	**$ 668.98**	**$ 22.30**
[Plus $63.46 monthly or $2.12 per diem for Regular Family Care Home for Acknowledgement Standard].				

Additional Allowable Expenses

The rate structure for Regular and Restricted Family Care is intended to be all-inclusive in covering the day-to-day needs of all children in care. However, there are provisions for annual clothing payments and one-time only payments to meet exceptional or unusual costs which cannot be anticipated.

One - Time Only Payments

Amounts for one-time only expenses require Resource supervisor authorization for up to $300 and regional executive director (or delegate) authorization for amounts in excess of $300. A review of the family care rate is required regarding available funds not committed or expended from the family care rate.

Examples of situations which may warrant such payments are: long distance travel for recreational, cultural, medical and visiting purposes; exceptional medical requirements not covered by the Medical Services Plan or the Health Services Division; exceptional clothing needs; cost of insurance deductible; and other exceptional and unusual costs that the caregiver cannot be expected to manage.

Annual Clothing Grant Payments

This payment is provided when a child entering care or moving from one resource to another has an inadequate clothing supply.

Annual Clothing Grant Payments Maximum Rates
(Effective January 29, 1996)

Age of child	*Payment*
0-6 months	$134.00
6 months - 1 year	148.00
1 - 2 years	206.00
3 - 10 years	261.00
11 - 14 years	321.00
15 years and over	375.00

B. Specialized Family Care Homes - Levels 1, 2 and 3

Rates

The Specialized Family Care Home Rates are all-inclusive and consist of the Regular Family Care rate and a Service payment. The Regular Family Care rate provides for the child's basic needs and the Service payment covers all direct program costs of the caregiver in providing service, including relief, transportation capital/leasing costs and insurance costs. The Service payment varies according to the designated level of care and the number of children or beds in the home.

For Level 2 and 3 Homes, the Ministry may enter into a "child-specific" or a "bed-specific" agreement. A child-specific agreement is used to purchase one bed for a specific child. A bed-specific agreement is used when a home will be used on a regular basis.

Specialized Family Care Home Rates
(Effective January 1, 1996)

Level 1- for each child (maximum number of children per home is six, including caregiver's own children)				
Age	*Service Payment*	*Family Care Rate*	*Total*	*Per Diem [1]/Per Child*

0-11	$351	$637.77	$988.77	$32.96
12-19	$351	$732.44	$1,083.44	$36.12
Level 2- (maximum number of beds is three)				
(i) for each Child-Specific agreement or each Bed-Specific agreement for one bed				
Age	***Service Payment***	***Family Care Rate***	***Total***	***Per Diem [1]/Per Child***
0 -11	$1,020	$637.77	$1,657.77	$55.26
12-19	$1,020	$732.44	$1,752.44	$58.41
(ii) for two children — Bed-Specific				
Age	***Service Payment***	***Family Care Rate***	***Total***	***Per Diem [1]/Per Child***
0 -11	$1,734	$1,275.54	$3,009.54	$50.16
12 - 19	$1,734	$1,464.88	$3,198.88	$53.31
(iii) for three children — Bed-Specific				
Age	***Service Payment***	***Family Care Rate***	***Total***	***Per Diem [1]/Per Child***
0-11	$2,346	$1,913.31	$4,259.31	$47.33
12-19	$2,346	$2,197.32	$4,543.32	$50.48
Level 3- (maximum number of beds is two)				
(i) for each Child-Specific agreement or each Bed-Specific agreement for one child				
Age	***Service Payment***	***Family Care Rate***	***Total***	***Per Diem [1]/ Per Child***
0 - 11	$1,683	$637.77	$2,320.77	$77.36
12 - 19	$1,683	$732.94	$2,415.44	$80.51
(ii) for two children — Bed-Specific				
Age	***Service Payment***	***Family Care Rate***	***Total***	***Per Diem [1]/ Per Child***
0 - 11	$2,856	$1,275.54	$4,131.54	$68.86
12 - 19	$2,856	$1,464.88	$4,320.88	$72.01
[1] Based on a 30-day month.				

Relief or Respite Care

"Relief" means both in-home and out-of-home relief for the family care home. "Respite" means out-of-home care provided by the director to a child's parents with whom there is a support service agreement.

Costs for three days of relief (per child or bed) are part of the service payment component of the Specialized Family Care Home rates. The following rates are paid to the home providing the service and apply to both relief and respite care (under intermittent care agreements).

Relief/Respite Care
(Per Diem)

Level 1	$46.12
Level 2	58.41
Level 3	80.51

Additional Allowable Expenses

The Specialized Family Care Home rates are intended to be all inclusive; however, the following provisions for one-time payments exist.

One - Time Only Payments

Level 1, 2 and 3 homes are eligible for one-time only payments according to the Regular Family Care Home policy. However, supplementary relief or professional support services are assessed differently.

Professional support Services

Where the Specialized Family Care Home is unable to meet some of a child's service requirements, the resource supervisor may authorize external supports to support the placement.

Supplementary Relief

In situations where more than three days per month relief is required to maintain a placement, and the cost would require the caregiver to spend an unreasonable or disproportionate amount of the service payment, supplementary relief may be approved for up to $300 for both in-home and out-of-home relief.

Substitute Care Arrangements

supported independent living placements are provided to 17 and 18-year-old youth in care. Please see page 70 for information on other specialized residential services.

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Foster Care Report
September 2000

Yukon

Introduction

The objective of foster care is to provide a child in care and custody with a family setting and a healthy parent role model when the child's birth family is unable to care for the child. The substitute family environment is intended to facilitate the child's development and provide a positive, learning environment for the healthy functioning of the child.

The Placement and support Services Unit of the Department of Health and Social Services is responsible for the recruitment of foster homes, the placement of children in foster homes and the provision of financial support and counselling/support services to foster parents in Whitehorse. Regional offices develop their own foster care resources using the central office for consultation and support services.

Types of Foster Care

The types of foster care in use in the Yukon are summarized below. No foster home may have more than four children in care at any time unless the children are all siblings. No foster home may care for more than two infants under the age of 18 months including their own. All foster homes may provide short- or long-term care.

Regular Foster Home

These homes are recruited from the community. The foster parents receive the prevailing basic maintenance payment for each child in their care. Regular foster parents generally specify the sex and age of children they prefer to foster.

Relative Home

A relative foster home is approved to care only for children in the Director's care and custody who are related to the foster parent(s). Relative foster home parents receive the basic maintenance payment for each child in their care.

Restricted Foster Home

This type of foster home is approved for the placement of one specific child only, usually a relative or a neighbour. A restricted foster home is usually used when no approved foster home is available and placement of the child in the home is in the child's best interests. This home may be used only for the specific child placed, for a specific time period.

Special Rate Foster Home

This type of home is intended to provide additional care and services to a child

with special physical, mental or emotional needs. The home receives a negotiated special rate over and above the regular maintenance rate for providing specific services to a particular child. The rate is specified in the Foster Home Special Rate Agreement that is signed by the foster parents, the worker and the Director. The rate is determined by a point system outlining specific services or needs.

Boarding Home

Boarding homes are intended to provide a safe residential setting and adequate food and lodging for teenagers in care. Boarding home parents are not expected to provide the same level of care and supervision as foster parents. Boarding home rates vary according to circumstances, but should not exceed the basic foster care rate.

Training and Approval

Once the completed Application for Fostering form is received, the Department initiates the approval process. This involves exploring three personal and/or community reference checks, a medical reference, a public health nurse reference, an RCMP criminal record check, an inquiry of the Child Protective Services files for all family members over 18 years of age, and completing a home study.

The home study is a vital component of the screening process. It is intended to assess the applicants' values, attitudes and potential as foster parents, including compliance with the foster home program standards. All members of the family should be interviewed at least once and also be seen as a group. The worker may recommend approval of a foster home; however, only the supervisor of Placement and support Services, relevant Regional supervisor or the Assistant Director of Family and Children's Services have authority to approve a home. Once a home is approved, both the foster parents and Assistant Director sign the Foster Home Agreement that is renewed annually. Where a home is found to be unsuitable, the worker notifies the applicants in writing and advises them of their right to appeal the decision to the worker's supervisor or to the Director of Family and Children's Services.

Orientation and training are the responsibility of the Placement and support Services Unit in Whitehorse and of the worker in the Regional Offices. Potential and approved foster parents are encouraged to attend orientation group training sessions in Whitehorse. At least one foster parent from each foster home is to complete a minimum of two hours of orientation and training prior to accepting their first foster child. In Whitehorse, a 21-hour orientation training was initiated in 1999 and all foster parents are encouraged to attend. Further essential training must be completed when the Department and/or foster parents identify it as a requirement. Other training is optional for approved foster parents but is encouraged. A foster parent support group has been established in Whitehorse.

A therapeutic Caregiver Program is in the development stage. During 2000, a "Looking After Children" pilot project will begin to be implemented and focus will be "Competency-Based training" for caregivers.

Review/Evaluation

Monthly contact is required with all approved foster parents when a child is placed in a home. All approved foster homes must be monitored every six months, regardless of whether a child in care is in the home. An annual review, to ensure compliance with the Foster Care Standards, includes at least one home visit, completion of a health and safety checklist and discussions with all

workers who have placed children in the home. A review of departmental staff services to the foster family, to ensure compliance with standards, is also completed at this time. When the foster family's circumstances change, a review must be conducted immediately. All reviews must be documented on the foster home file. Supplements to the home study are required every three years, at which time new references may be requested.

Appeals/Complaints

A foster child or a foster parent may make a complaint concerning the child's placement in or removal from a foster home; a foster parent may also state complaints concerning Departmental services a child is or should be receiving. Complaints should be made directly to the worker but may be directed to the supervisor and appealed to the Director.

Allegations of Abuse or Neglect

A child protection worker, according to standard departmental procedures, investigates any reports of abuse in a foster home. The foster family support worker provides supports to the foster home.

The Association of Yukon Foster Parents

A foster parent support group, the Association of Yukon Foster Parents was established in the fall of 1989 and became a registered non-profit society in October 1990. It provides monthly support and information meetings for foster parents. In addition, it was active in responding to the Foster Home Review Committee's request for feedback on proposed standards.

Damage Compensation

The Department of Health and Social Services does not usually cover the cost of damages caused by a child in care and custody. Foster parents are encouraged to ensure that their own household insurance provides them with adequate protection in the event of damage. Yukon foster parents are covered for extended coverage through an agreement with the British Columbia Foster Parent Insurance Plan and the Department will cover the deduction of this rider. The Director has authority to provide compensation in exceptional circumstances.

Foster Care Rates

Establishment of Rates

The following rate structure is currently under review. Foster care rates are established by the Department of Health and Social Services. Effective September 1991 (and retroactive to July 1991), a new rate which applies to all age groups but varies according to regional location, was introduced; prior to this time, rates varied by age and region. The Department's regional offices are responsible for managing foster care resources in their areas; payments for foster parents are made by cheque from head office (Whitehorse).

Basic Maintenance Rates

The basic rate, which varies depending on geographic location, is intended to cover the normal costs of food, transportation and personal care items. In addition, an annual allocation to cover the costs of maintaining a basic wardrobe is provided in two instalments (spring and fall). A further winter

clothing allowance is issued in the fall to cover the costs of a winter jacket and boots for each foster child. Foster parents also receive, on behalf of each child in their care, a monthly allowance for personal spending, hair cuts, club fees, birthday gifts, etc. The basic maintenance rates are currently under review for a cost of living increase.

Foster Care Rates
(Rates effective July 1, 1991)

A. Basic Maintenance		
Area of Residence		***Per Diem***
Area I		
(Whitehorse)		$23.25
Area II		
(Dawson, Pelly Crossing, Mayo, Watson Lake, Faro, Ross River, Carcross, Teslin Carmacks, Haines Junction)		26.76
Area III		
(Old Crow)		49.70
B. Clothing Allowance		
Age of Child	***Basic Annual Allowance[1]***	***Winter Clothing Allowance***
0-23 months	$320.00	$40.00
2-5 years	358.00	65.00
6-12 years	556.00	95.00
13-18 years	637.00	130.00
C. Child's Allowance		
per month/per child		$135.00
[1] This Allowance is paid in two instalments - one in the spring and one in the fall.		

Additional Allowable Expenses

In addition to the basic rates, foster parents may also receive the following:

i. *allowances for school supplies* - paid once a year for foster children enrolled in school. The amount payable is $70.00 per child in grades one to seven and $90.00 per child in grades eight to 12.
ii. *dental treatment* - up to $100.00 per child per visit. Payments exceeding this amount must receive supervisory approval.
iii. *orthodontic treatments* - up to $5,000.00 per child, on prior approval by the supervisor only. Amounts exceeding this must receive advance approval from the Director.
iv. *glass frames* - $100.00 per child. Payments exceeding this amount must receive prior supervisory approval or be covered by the child's allowance.
v. *Christmas allowance* - birth to four years receive $40.00, five to 11 years receive $60.00 and 12 to 18 years receive $90.00.
vi. *respite care services* - approved on a special need basis.
vii. *day care services* - approved on a special need basis.
viii. *extra transportation costs* - approved on a special need basis.
ix. *holiday allowance* — provided once per year if travel for the holiday is outside the Yukon.

Special Rate Provisions

Parents caring for a child who has physical, mental or emotional special needs receive a special rate in addition to the basic maintenance and other amounts outlined above. The amount is calculated by the social worker, using a

recently-revised point rating system based on the child's special needs and the extra services required to meet these needs. Special rates are authorized for a maximum period of six months, and reviewed at the end of that period. A new Special Rate Needs Assessment was developed and implemented during 1999-2000.

Other Substitute Care Arrangements

The Department of Health and Social Services contracts for residential child care services in facilities provided by the Department. One of the Department-owned facilities has eight beds and cares for teens who exhibit behavioural or emotional problems. One group home is contracted for three beds and is designed for youth who are cognitively low-functioning and have serious behavioural problems. A third group home is contracted for four beds and provides a therapeutic program for youth who are sex offenders and are cognitively-impaired.

There is one receiving and assessment residential program. It provides short-term and emergency placements on a 24-hour basis for children at risk and in the care of the Director. The maximum capacity is 14 children, of either gender, from 0 to 18 years of age. Children under two years are placed, whenever possible, in a foster home within 24 hours. The receiving home also provides an additional bed for stabilization purposes and supervised visiting services. The Department provides the facility but contracts privately for the services.

There is one six-bed residential treatment program that provides treatment services for youth with severe behavioural or emotional problems and one four-bed residential treatment program for conduct disorder/oppositional defiant male youth. Both are government-staffed and operated services.

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Northwest Territories

Introduction

The Foster Care program in the Northwest Territories offers a substitute family environment for children who come into the care of the Director of Child and Family Services. The objective of every foster care placement is to provide children with an experience of positive family life while maintaining birth family involvement and cultural identity.

Eight Health and Social Services Boards across the NWT deliver foster care programs through legislation and standards administered by the Department of Health and Social Services. Child Protection Workers guide applicants through an established approval process while Child Protection supervisors approve homes on behalf of the Director of Child and Family Services.

Types of Foster Homes

The majority of foster homes in the Northwest Territories are regular and special need homes that provide varying degrees of service. Recognizing the importance of cultural and personal identity to children and youth, the NWT *Child and Family Services Act*, proclaimed in 1998, mandates Child Protection Workers to look to provisional/extended family foster homes as a primary placement resource.

Regular Foster Homes

Foster homes are approved to deliver services for up to four children in the Director's care. In cases of sibling groups, homes may be approved to provide care to additional children and youth. All regular approved homes are reviewed on an annual basis.

Provisional/Extended Family Foster Homes

The home of a relative or other appropriate individual who has a positive relationship with the child may be approved to provide services to a specific child or children. A provisional home is subject to a shorter approval process and is closed when the child for whom it was opened leaves. If the foster family wishes to continue fostering, all procedures not completed during the provisional approval process must be completed prior to placement. All Provisional/Extended Family foster homes are reviewed on an annual basis.

Emergency Foster Homes

Emergency foster homes deliver services in some communities. They must be available 24 hours a day to provide care to two or more children. Emergency homes are required to successfully complete the approval process prior to the placement of any children.

Approval and training

All foster parents in the NWT are required to successfully complete an established screening and approval process prior to providing services to children in the Director's care. This process is completed within 60 days of the initial application. The home study process completed by Child Protection Workers is at the heart of the approval process. The following documentation is required prior to final approval:

- Application to foster form
- Criminal record check
- Release/receipt of information form
- Medical exam forms
- Oath of confidentiality form
- Foster home agreement form

The home study process allows the Child Protection Worker to find out how the family operates and to learn more about their attitudes toward children and parenting. It is also a chance to further describe what is expected of foster parents and to assist applicants in making a final decision about fostering. Issues that are addressed include emotional maturity and stability of the applicants, positive parenting techniques, physical suitability of the home, finances and expected relationships with the Department and family members of children in care. Each family member must be interviewed during the process and a minimum of one interview is held with the entire family.

Regional Health and Social Services Boards in conjunction with local Foster Family Associations provide mandatory and voluntary training to foster parents in the NWT.

Yellowknife Foster Family Association

The Yellowknife Foster Family Association was founded in 1977 to allow foster parents to share problems and frustrations as well as successes, and to present a more effective and unified voice when communicating with other organizations. The Association is funded through the Yellowknife Health and Social Services Board and makes available numerous supports to foster families in Yellowknife. It also serves as a source of new information on best practice foster care methods and trends. The Association, with funding from the Department, also operates a toll free telephone support line and circulates a quarterly newsletter to all foster homes in the NWT.

In addition to the above services, the Association hosted the 2001 Canadian Foster Family Association meetings in Yellowknife May 31st to June 3rd 2001.

Foster Care Rates

Basic maintenance foster care rates are established by individual Health and Social Services Boards and have been developed in relation to the Social Assistance Food Allowance Scales. Basic maintenance rates are intended to cover expenses including food, personal care items, household costs and miscellaneous items. Under this methodology, communities are grouped into scales with higher rates payable in the more remote communities. Per diems range from $24 in southern communities to $47 in more isolated locations.

In addition to the basic rate, a monthly clothing rate is paid for each child. Other expenses that may be reimbursed with prior approval and submission of receipts include education and recreation expenses, childcare equipment and travel costs. The Health and Social Services Boards cover health expenses not

covered by Territorial Health Insurance.

Special Rate Provisions

Foster parents caring for children and youth with special needs are compensated for the additional time, effort and skills that are required to provide services. Child Protection Workers undertake an assessment process with the foster parent to determine which level of special rate is applicable in each child's case. Once completed and approved by the supervisor, the special rate is added to the child's basic maintenance rate.

Substitute Care Arrangements

Group homes are designed to present a family-like environment for children in care for whom placement in a foster home is inappropriate. Group homes offer consistent structure, discipline, instruction and emotional support to assist children and youth in returning to a family environment. Most group homes have a receiving function for emergency placements when an appropriate foster home cannot be immediately located.

The Territorial treatment Centre in Yellowknife and the trail Cross treatment Centre in Fort Smith make available specialized treatment services to children who are at high risk and display emotional, behavioural and/or psychological difficulties. The Territorial treatment Centre provides services to children between the ages of eight and 12 while trail Cross serves children and adolescents between the ages of 12 and 16. Referrals to facilities in Southern Canada occur when NWT resources are unable or unavailable to meet the needs of children in care.

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Nunavut

Introduction

In Nunavut, foster care is a placement option for children who are living away from home. The Regional Directors of Social Programs under the *Child and Family Services Act* approve foster homes; placements are made by social workers in the community offices. There are three regions in Nunavut. The Department funds the foster homes through the budgeting process.

Types of Foster Care

Nunavut has two types of foster care: provisional foster homes (child-specific homes) and regular foster homes. Some of the regular foster homes may have developed additional skills with difficult children and may be assigned such children.

Provisional Foster Homes

Social workers are encouraged to identify a relative home, where possible, for children brought into care. These are child-specific homes that are approved by the Regional Director of Social Programs in the region.

Regular Foster Homes

Children under Voluntary Agreement who are in need of protection or awaiting adoption may be placed in a regular foster home. The Regional Director of Social Programs in the region approves regular foster homes.

Training and Approval

The home study is the basis of the evaluation process for any foster home for children. The home study is prepared by the community social worker and submitted to the Regional Director of Social Programs for review and approval. The home study collects information on the applicant's motivation to foster a child, their education, employment history, income, residence, skills, their health, marital relationship, and relationships with their own children, attitudes towards raising children, to religion, to education, and to community standards. The home study explores the skills or attitudes towards contact with family of origin and ability to deal with pressures from the family of origin should this become a reality. References are required from a minimum of two non-related persons on the subject of the family's ability to parent.

The application, accompanied by the home study and supporting documentation is the basis of determination, of approval by the Regional Director of Social Programs. The foster home agreement is signed yearly after the approval process has been completed. The Regional Director of Social Programs may approve, approve with conditions or revoke an approval as a foster home.

Approval as a provisional home and a regular foster home includes a criminal record check, reviews of departmental records, medical examinations, and an in-depth home study. Yearly reviews of the home are required and the home is closed upon the child leaving the home. Some of the foster parents may be identified by the social worker as having special skills in handling difficult and challenging children and as such they may be assigned such challenging children. Yearly reviews of the homes are conducted by the social workers.

No universal standardized training for foster parents is available to date in Nunavut.

Review/Evaluation

Yearly updates of foster homes are required and are submitted to the Regional Director of Social Programs. The updates must include a recommendation to continue to use the home.

Appeals/Complaints

There is no formal appeal or complaint mechanism, but anyone who is not satisfied with the services is encouraged to communicate with the worker or failing that, the community supervisor, the Regional Director of Social Programs and Services or the Executive Officer of the region for assistance.

Allegations of Abuse or Neglect

A community worker not directly responsible for supervision of the home must investigate allegations of abuse or neglect immediately. Physical or sexual abuse complaints must be referred to the police for investigation of possible criminal charges.

Damage Compensation

Foster parents do not have to carry liability insurance. Inquiries are being made to determine if an affordable source of liability insurance can be made available to foster parents. When a child willfully or accidentally causes damage to property an application must be made to the Regional Director of Social Programs for reimbursement. In matters of any significant amounts the Regional Director of Social Programs would request approval from the Director of Child and Family Services.

Foster Care Rates

Establishment of Rates

Foster Care rates are reviewed by the Department of Health and Social Services after consultation with the Regions and following approval by the Minister.

Basic Maintenance Rates

The Department has a basic maintenance rate for Provisional Homes and Regular Foster Care Homes. The rate is to cover food, housing, laundry, personal items and additional care costs.

Basic Maintenance Rates
(Effective April 1, 1999)

	Provisional per Diem	*Regular per Diem*	*Special per Diem*
Basic Care Cost-Large Centres	$25.00	$37.00	*$50.00-$100.00* [1]
Basic Care Cost-Small Centres	$25.00	$40.00	$60.00-$100.00 [1]
[1] For special needs children according to need and approval.			

Additional Allowable Expenses

The Department of Health and Social Services may provide additional amounts to cover emergency and initial placement costs. Additional funds may be provided for initial and seasonal clothing, gifts at birthday and Christmas, spending monies, recreation, sports, vacation travel, project-related travel, land activities, day care, and summer programs. Other items and services may be approved based on need.

Respite Care

Respite care may be arranged by the social worker at approved foster homes as required and requested.

Special Rate Provisions

Upon placing the child in foster care the social worker approves the basic rate or requests approval of the Regional Director of Social Programs or Services for a special rate. Identification of a special rate would require justification based on the child's behaviours, the physical or mental challenges presented by the child and the amount of time required by the foster family to address the child's needs.

Substitute Care Arrangements

There are a number of alternate care placements in Nunavut to meet the needs of special children. There are two contracted group home facilities for children five-19 years of age with a total of 14 beds. There are two contracted group homes for cognitively impaired children four-19 years of age with a total of 16 beds and there is one private facility with a maximum of five beds for children with high physical and cognitive needs.

There are no institutional facilities in Nunavut for children in care. Out-of-territory placements are used when necessary where space is available. Voluntary Assistance Agreements are available for youth 16-19 who have entered into an agreement with the Director of Child and Family Services to assist with independent living.

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sur les services à l'enfance et à la famille
Avril 1996

Avant-propos

Le présent document constitue la première édition du *Rapport statistique annuel sur les services à l'enfance et à la famille (SEF)* produit par le Groupe de travail sur l'information sur les services à l'enfance et à la famille. Le rapport présente des données statistiques sur les services de bien-être à l'enfance au Canada. Le format du rapport est fondé sur des tableaux statistiques qui se trouvaient auparavant dans le document intitulé *Information sur les services à l'enfance et à la famille* et dans le rapport intitulé *Bien-être de l'enfance au Canada : Le rôle des autorités provinciales et territoriales en matière d'enfance maltraitée.*

Le Rapport statistique annuel sur les SEF présente des données portant sur un éventail de services offerts aux enfants et aux familles, notamment des services de protection et d'adoption, en se concentrant principalement sur les enfants pris en charge. Les provinces et les territoires présentent des statistiques sur les services à l'enfance et à la famille et, dans certains cas, des données concernant les dépenses occasionnées pour ces services par le ministère responsable du bien-être de l'enfance. Les données sont fournies pour les années 1992-1993, 1993-1994 et 1994-1995, et elles peuvent être présentées soit pour l'exercice financier, pour l'année civile, pour le mois de mars ou au 31 mars, selon le système de compte rendu dont dispose chacun des gouvernements. La prochaine édition du rapport présentera les données pour 1994-1995 et pour 1995-1996. Les provinces et les territoires ont présenté des statistiques tirées de systèmes de données mis au point pour répondre à leurs besoins respectifs en matière d'administration et de gestion de cas. Les types de données recueillies et les méthodes de compte rendu sont fort différents. Par exemple, certaines données peuvent comprendre toutes les allégations de mauvais traitements à l'égard d'enfants, et d'autres ne porter que sur les cas ayant donné lieu à des enquêtes. Les données réelles au sujet des clients peuvent représenter le nombre de familles ou d'enfants. Par conséquent, **les données relatives à une province ou à un territoire donné ne peuvent et ne doivent pas faire l'objet de comparaisons avec celles d'une autre province ou d'un autre territoire.**

Pour chaque province et territoire, une législation prévoit la protection des enfants. Il y a plusieurs façons d'assurer des services à un enfant ayant besoin de protection. Des *services de prévention* peuvent être fournis par les autorités responsables du bien-être de l'enfance, avec l'accord et la collaboration de la famille, afin d'aider à régler les problèmes. Des *ententes volontaires* officielles peuvent être négociées entre le ministère et la famille de l'enfant en vue de déterminer les responsabilités de chacune des parties pour la garde et la prise en charge de l'enfant; il s'agit généralement d'ententes temporaires qui peuvent comporter le placement de l'enfant à l'extérieur du foyer familial. Lorsqu'il est jugé qu'un enfant fait face à un danger imminent, les autorités responsables du bien-être de l'enfance peuvent le *retirer du foyer*. Lorsqu'un enfant est retiré du foyer ou qu'il n'est pas possible ou convenable de conclure une entente

volontaire, une *audience pour la protection de l'enfant* est organisée. Il appartient alors à la cour de décider si l'enfant a besoin de protection. Elle peut rendre une ordonnance concernant la garde, la prise en charge et(ou) la tutelle de l'enfant.

Pour toutes les parties du rapport où les provinces et les territoires n'ont pu fournir les données nécessaires, nous avons utilisé la mention «s.o.». Dans chacune des parties, les tableaux statistiques sont suivis d'un glossaire qui présente la définition de termes, comme «enfant» et «enfants pris en charge», et qui décrit divers statuts légaux.

Le tableau A présente les estimations intercensitaires les plus récentes provenant de Statistique Canada au sujet de l'ensemble de la population infantile canadienne, par province et par territoire, pour les enfants de divers groupes d'âge.

Pour de plus amples renseignements au sujet du *Rapport statistique annuel sur les services à l'enfance et à la famille* ou sur le projet d'information en général, veuillez vous adresser au bureau suivant :

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Tableau A Nombre estimatif d'enfants au Canada, par province et territoire Juillet 1995p [P] (en milliers)

Province	16 ans et moins	17 ans	18 ans	18 ans et moins
Terre-Neuve	133,5	9,2	9,4	152,1
Île-du-Prince-Édouard	33,4	2,0	2,0	37,4
Nouvelle-Écosse	209,4	12,5	12,8	234,7
Nouveau-Brunswick	169,7	10,6	11,2	191,5
Québec	1 603,3	98,4	99,0	1 800,7
Ontario	2 524,4	140,5	141,9	2 806,8
Manitoba	277,8	15,7	15,6	309,1
Saskatchewan	266,4	14,9	14,9	296,2
Alberta	702,0	37,8	38,0	777,8
Colombie-Britannique	833,3	47,3	47,7	928,3
Yukon	8,1	0,4	0,4	8,9

Territoires du Nord-Ouest	23,4	1,1	1,1	25,6
Canada	***6 784,7***	***390,2***	***394,1***	***7 569,0***

p. Données préliminaires

Source : Statistique Canada - Estimations intercensitaires

Le rapport en format PDF (la taille du fichier 384 KB)
Télécharger Acrobat Reader
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Dernière modification : 2002-06-07 Notes importantes